

# The Nation

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 Vol. XXVII., No. 11.]  
 Postage: U.K. 3d.; Abroad 1d.

SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 1920.

 [PRICE 6D.  
 Registered as a Newspaper.

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## Events of the Week.

ONE might infer, if experience did not suggest extreme caution, that Mr. Lloyd George's speech in Parliament on Monday meant smooth progress for the Russian negotiations. He was in his finest combative form. He avoided detail or precision, and took the elementary position that in view of the universal shortage in Europe, and especially of the coming dearth of grain, it would be folly to refuse to trade with Russia. He proclaimed that he was acting now, and had from the first acted, upon the decisions of the Supreme Allied Council. He affected to take the Northcliffe view, that the Bolsheviks are murderous barbarians. By why not trade with them, he argued, for our mutual advantage? We traded with Tsardom at its worst; we traded with Abdul Hamid while he massacred the Armenians; we have even in the past taken the lead in opening up trade with cannibals. Whenever have we refused to trade with a country because we disapproved of its Government? The opposition came only from a few of the wilder (or stupider) Tories, and the Premier clearly had the House with him. If this is Mr. George's view, it seems at least to forbid any return to the device, so often used before, of demanding the abandonment of the Soviet system as a preliminary to peace or trade. But with this Government one is never sure. Is it waiting to see how the Polish war ends? In any event the well-informed correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" announces that there is a hitch in the negotiations. The difficulty can hardly come from the Russians, for they have agreed to the British stipulations for the return of prisoners, desistance from propaganda, and respect for British interests in the East.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE doubtless has his difficulties with reactionary colleagues and impossible Allies. The French, who are the only people in Western Europe who do not need to import grain, are using every effort to frustrate the negotiations. They claim the gold. They

threaten to attach it, if the Russians use it to start credit operations. They use the Northcliffe Press as if it were a semi-official French organ. They employ every trick of journalism to discredit the Russian negotiators, knowing well that their mouths are sealed by the conditions imposed upon them. And in the meantime Wrangel's army, which we have steadily fostered under the pretence of a zeal for the refugees, has begun a new advance from Perekop, fighting with tanks and armored cars—according to the "Pravda," of our supplying. None the less we do not observe that these low manoeuvres make much impression on public opinion, which is weary of the Russian war, and the folly of the blockade, and by no means enamored of the French and their methods. Mr. Lloyd George has excited great expectations, and he spoke once more on Monday of the "prodigious quantities" of grain, oil, flax, and timber now ready for export from Russia. His prestige is at stake, and it will suffer irrevocably if he allows these negotiations to be thwarted. If he is really waiting to see what comes of the Polish effort, he will have wasted a few months at a moment when the march of famine in Europe makes every fresh delay a new crime against the livelihood of Europe and of our people. The Poles are more or less holding their own, but the longer they fight, the less grain will anyone get from Russia.

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THE result of the German General Election leaves it doubtful whether any Government can be formed which will command a secure majority. The former Coalition is just short of an absolute majority, but it may pick up the support of some minor groups, and could jog along in normal conditions, unless the Right and Left united to overthrow it. The poll was abnormally heavy (over 90 per cent., it is said), and none of the predicted disturbances happened. The system of proportional representation is the most accurate yet invented. The results may be tabulated thus, for the House of 460 members:—

I.—COALITION: Majority Socialists, 110; Catholic Centre, 67; Democrats, 45; Total, 222.

II.—RIGHT: German Nationals, 65; German People's Party, 61; Total, 126.

III.—LEFT: Independent Socialists, 80; Communists, 2; Total, 82.

IV.—MINOR GROUPS: Christian Federalists, 21; Bavarian Peasants, 4; Guelphs, 5; Total, 30.

The first of these minor groups is really a semi-detached offshoot of the right Centre, and may vote either with the Right or with the Coalition. With them it has a bare majority.

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THE feature of the election is the growth both of the Left and of the Right. The Majority Socialists have lost heavily, but less heavily than was expected; the Democrats are the worst sufferers. These are plain symptoms of the general misery and unrest, and also of the sharp class cleavage. The total Socialist vote (192 out of 460) brings a proletarian majority within sight. The real difficulty of the governmental problem is that the Minority Socialists will not enter any coalition with middle-class Socialists, and have even refused to discuss

joint action with the Majority Socialists. On the other hand neither the Majority Socialists nor the Democrats would like to compromise themselves by bringing the German People's Party, Jingo, Capitalist and anti-Semitic as it is, within the Coalition. Chancellor Müller and his Cabinet have placed their resignation in President Ebert's hands, but may in the end return to office if not to power, for lack of an alternative. There are rumors that the Reichstag may be dissolved and another election tried almost immediately.

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THE Prime Minister opened an ingenious "bluff" on the Trade Union deputation which asked him what he was going to do about the Irish laborers who object to handling munitions designed for their fellow countrymen's bodies. Mr. George retorted that by using "industrial pressure" to influence "political decisions," the Trade Unions were offering a "serious challenge" to the Constitution, which the Government must resist or "abdicate." Official trade unionism has as yet taken no hand in this form of direct action; and, on the whole, has discouraged it, for the embargo on the English railwaymen's handling of Polish munitions has been removed. But it is like Mr. George to suggest that its object is to stop a "box of revolvers" sent to protect Irish policemen from being murdered. The Government are fitting out, not a box of Webleys, but an expeditionary army almost as large as the one they equipped against Germany. The Labor Party hate this policy and resist it; and its execution incidentally offers a peculiarly difficult and arduous choice to British comrades of Irish railway workers. It would be easier to fight it with the 150 or so Members of Parliament, to which Labor was entitled in 1918. But that is just what Mr. George's electoral tactics stopped it from getting. Who, therefore, is he that he should censure direct action? The Georgian method of Government is a continuous initiation of and response to it.

\* \* \*

NOR, indeed, does this Parliament ever come in as a serious check on the Executive. Not only does Parliament never form policy; it often hears of its results after the meanest newspaper in England knows all about them. Take the savage reversion to militarism implied in the return to scarlet and bearskin—a frivolous concession to the Court, which involves the re-clothing of the entire Army. This is incurred at a moment when every sixpence is wanted, and when the mere sight of the pomps of war sickens the honest heart and affronts the finer memory. Yet when Parliament pricks up its ears, Mr. Churchill greets it with the derisive answer that nothing can be done, for the "looms have been set in motion." Yes; many looms have been set in motion; and strange patterns are being woven on them. But the House has no more power to stay the wanton act than to stop the Poles from firing off the guns that this man privily handed them. Though the Estimate for the new uniforms will nominally be submitted, it is really presented as an accomplished administrative charge. Already the House has been fobbed off with the figures for the first year's expense (£130,000 net), which conceal a vast and continually expanding charge.

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THE Republican nominating convention in Chicago has gone through its mechanical stages under conditions to which there is no parallel in the history of either party. The total number of delegates is given as 984, so that the successful candidate had to get about 500 votes to secure

a bare majority. At the outset the chances seemed in favor of Governor Lowden, despite accusations as to bought delegates. The party bosses were manifestly using every device for the elimination of Hiram Johnson, while the gross mismanagement of General Wood's campaign, with its fabulous expenditure, was thought to have put him far behind. Senator Johnson was the only one of the champions attending the Convention, and he followed the Roosevelt plan of supplementing the efforts of his backers in the Convention by holding a terrific meeting in the city on the evening before the opening exercises. The first day was marked by a "keynote" speech from Senator Lodge—a bitter reflection upon the Wilsonian policy and method. Mr. Lodge accused the President of entwining the Convention with the Treaty so as to nullify the power of the Senate. And, having asserted that the Allies should first have made peace with Germany and then formed themselves into a firm alliance, he denounced the scheme brought back by Mr. Wilson as an alliance and not a league.

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"THE fight is lost and the avenue of the Courts is now exhausted." So the attorney for the American distillers surrenders to the Drys. National Prohibition is clamped upon the United States by the final judgment of the Supreme Court, delivered in Washington on June 7th. Five months, therefore, after the coming into effect of the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution, the vast liquor interests of North America abandon hope of survival—for it is not to be supposed that they can now make any serious recovery in the Canadian Dominion. The central constitutional issue involved in the judgment is that of the limits of State sovereignty. Rhode Island and New Jersey (which alone, with Connecticut, refuse to ratify national Prohibition) contend that Congress has no right to pass laws affecting the life and habits of the people in the several States. Such matters belong to the police power, in respect of which, by the terms of the Constitution, the States are sovereign.

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It would be impossible to over-emphasize the importance of a decision which establishes a social experiment affecting at their vital sources the habits of the strongest nation in the world. We shall see almost immediately whether it is to make any difference in the Presidential election. Neither of the great parties will dare to hint on its platform at efforts to alter the law, but it is just conceivable that the Wets may seriously contemplate rebellion to the extent of nominating a candidate of their own. The wider results are immeasurable. America, so far, sees the fruits of Prohibition in a gathering storm of anger among a considerable class, and in an ever-ascending scale of prosperity and social welfare, to the accompaniment of emptying workhouses, prisons, orphan asylums, accident wards—and, let it be noted, of hotels and restaurants making money as never before.

\* \* \*

SIGNOR NITTI's resignation, the second within three weeks, creates an extremely bad Parliamentary situation in Italy. This particular demonstration of the perils of the group system comes at a critical moment both nationally and internationally. While its immediate occasion is discontent with the Government's complicated proposals for raising the price of bread and at the same time subsidizing individual consumers to enable them to meet the increase, it is clear enough that if the Prime Minister had not fallen on this issue he would have gone on some other. Since the withdrawal of the support of

the Clericals three weeks ago his prospects of commanding a firm Parliamentary majority have been remote, and the indignation provoked by the belief that Mr. Lloyd George and M. Millerand had executed a private deal at Hythe behind his back has played a substantial part in the *débâcle*. As it is there can be small hope that the retiring Prime Minister will pursue a thankless task further. The only man with capacity to resolve the deadlock is Giolitti. He has been biding his time and may now feel that his moment has come. The outlook for Spa is distinctly more sombre.

\* \* \*

THE complete returns of the Irish County Council and local elections are not yet to hand, but enough have come in to establish the supremacy of Sinn Fein in more than half of the Ulster area and throughout all Leinster, Munster, and Connaught. Republican Labor has shared in this result and will co-operate in working out its consequences. Outside of Belfast City and the four County Councils of Antrim, Down, Armagh, and Derry, every county and borough council in Ireland is now controlled by Sinn Fein, and with these four counties themselves, there are local councils which are firmly held by Sinn Fein or by a Sinn Fein-Nationalist combination. Therefore, the machinery of local government in Ireland is in Sinn Fein hands, to be controlled and wielded in accordance with the policy directed by Dáil Eireann. With this extension of its fighting front a new phase of the struggle is entered upon, with many subtle complexities and far-reaching ramifications. It is not a situation in which the army and the fleet can be of much assistance.

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THE Ulster results are remarkable. Confirming the experience of the spring municipal elections, they show the reason of the steady hostility of the Carsonites to proportional representation. Two of the six counties proposed by a Bill at present before Parliament to be cut out of Ireland show a clear disposition to the contrary. When the two vacant seats in each county are filled by co-option, the Sinn Fein-Nationalist combination in Tyrone will have seventeen seats in the County Council against eleven Unionists, and in Fermanagh there will be a similar majority of thirteen to nine. Importance attaches to these figures, since Tyrone has a decisive influence on the partition issue. In Antrim, where the declining Carsonite influence is strongest, two Sinn Fein members have been returned, as well as Nationalist and Labor representatives, and of this citadel the "Belfast News Letter" writes:—"We cannot regard the results of the elections as satisfactory." Derry City returned a Sinn Fein member at the General Election and a Sinn Fein-Nationalist Municipal Council at the last election in January, but the county is still held by a Unionist (if the term Unionist still survives) majority of three. Similarly County Armagh returns a Unionist majority of five. But in Cavan, Sinn Fein has captured twenty of the twenty-one seats, in Donegal all save two, and in Monaghan sixteen out of twenty.

\* \* \*

A MEETING of the Council of the League of Nations will be held on Monday to consider the appeal from the Persian Minister in Paris against the intervention of the Bolsheviks at Enzeli. It is doubtful whether this gentleman is acting in this matter for the Persian Government. He seems rather to reflect the French official view, which on Persian questions is equally anti-Russian and anti-British. The landing at Enzeli was, of course, an infraction of Persian neutrality. But could the League deal

with that without considering the continual infractions of Persia's neutrality and sovereignty by British forces in the last two years? In point of fact some Persians seem to be turning to Moscow for aid against Western Imperialism. There are even renewed rumors of a native "Red" revolution which is said to have started at Resht (inland from Enzeli) and obliged the British force in that town to withdraw further into the interior. Another matter which may come before the League's Council is the quarrel of Tchecs and Poles over Teschen. Lord Robert Cecil, in a series of questions to the Prime Minister, has suggested that in spite of Lord Curzon's categorical refusal, the Russo-Polish war might also be discussed. He went on to suggest that Mr. George himself might sit on the League's Council as the British representative, and drew a favorable but non-committal reply.

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THE wisdom of these suggestions seems to us questionable. The more the Council of the League is made into a duplicate of the Allied Supreme Council, the less claim can it have to impartiality. How can statesmen whose colleagues and allies are busily forwarding uniforms, munitions, guns, and instructors to the Poles, and whose Sovereign sends them a message of congratulation when they win a victory, possibly act as disinterested arbitrators and mediators? It is even said that the French are now sending their black troops to help the Poles. France is morally if not also legally a belligerent in this war. Yet the Council of the League means merely France and ourselves, for Belgium, Brazil, Greece, and the rest are merely echoes. To bring in the League (of which Poland is a member) to back the Poles would be the worst turn which events could take. Yet it was foreshadowed some months ago by the "Times." That, of course, is not Lord Robert Cecil's intention, but in his enthusiasm for the League as an institution, does he sufficiently measure its existing defects and its compromising associations? Could one expect Russia to accept the Allies and backers of Poland as an impartial tribunal? The simple fact is that while the Alliance lasts there can be no League.

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THE delegates of the Labor Party who were sent to Hungary at the invitation of Admiral Horthy's Government, have issued an emphatic report confirming the existence of a "White Terror." The signatories include Colonel Wedgwood, Mr. Stuart Bunning, and Mr. Jowett. Their conclusions are in flat contradiction with the official British reports, which were evidently both partial and ignorant. The delegation seems to have enjoyed freedom of movement and to have done its work thoroughly. It reports that no less than 12,000 persons are still imprisoned or interned without trial. In one place 350 prisoners were kept in a building intended for fifty. All the newer trade unions are suppressed and the older ones greatly restricted, while the right to strike has been abolished. There are the most elaborate systems of censorship and espionage upon opinion. Of the murders, kidnappings, tortures, and violations of persons suspected of Socialist tendencies, the report gives ample and gruesome details. These brutalities are the work of the officers of the "White" Army, which the Government is unable to control. The Report concludes by recalling the fact that this Government was set up by the British Commissioner, acting for the Allies, and that it has broken the conditions on which it was recognized. We agree with the Report that this fact makes for the British Government the right and duty of remonstrance.



## Politics and Affairs.

### THE WARNING FROM GERMANY.

THE average Englishman would be startled and indignant if anyone were to tell him that he would be wise to go to Germany for his model of representative institutions. A demonstration of the differences between the results of our last General Election and that which the Germans have just conducted would rapidly carry conviction. Starting with the simplest and most democratic of franchises, which treats every legally adult man and woman as a citizen, with none of the complications as to age, occupancy, and plural qualification which still distort our own register, the German system goes on to apply a system of proportional representation which combines meticulous accuracy with relative simplicity. Herr Theodor Wolff explained it clearly in our last issue, and we need remind the reader only of its outline. Every 60,000 votes cast in any division for any party list at once elects the first name on that list, and so on with other units of 60,000, until a fractional remainder is reached. The remainders cast for each list are then added together in each geographical group of divisions, with the result that a few more members are elected by these remainders. Finally the fractions (votes of less than 60,000), which are still left over, are collected from the whole *Reich*, and on their basis a last choice is made from the names that figure in each party's national lists. It is a simple method, and it secures the result that virtually no vote at all can be wasted. Not only is this so, but no one is put off with a second preference. The Reichstag is an exact map of German opinion on a scale of 1 in 60,000. It contains on that ratio as many Socialists, Liberals, Clericals, and Jingoos as there are men and women of these opinions in the German nation. The merits of the list system, by which each party presents its candidates in a certain order, which determines automatically their relative chances of election, may be a disputable point. But the accuracy of the method defies criticism. It is an improvement on that first adopted in Germany, good as that was, and scarcely lags behind the original plan, accurate but unworkable, of the pioneer Archdeacon Hare. This Reichstag may work well or ill: it may be weak and quarrelsome: it may lack the big qualities of statesmanship. But such as it is, with its qualities and defects, it perfectly reflects national opinion. A year and a half ago we elected a Parliament on the obsolete majority system which almost every people in Europe had discarded. The result is a Chamber which lacks every element of authority and prestige, because it is not and never was even an approximate reflection of the votes cast.

When we turn from the system to the Parliament itself, there is less reason for congratulation. The general prediction has been fulfilled. The extremer parties at both ends of the scale of opinion have greatly increased their strength. That is everywhere and always a sign of universal discontent. The present is intolerable for every class of the population, and it turns to one or the other of the extremes which stand for sweeping changes. No broad description will define either of these extremes with complete accuracy. The Independent Socialists, who must not be confused with the Spartacists or Communists, mark the revolt of the industrial workers from the opportunism of the Majority, which compromised with Nationalism during the war, and with middle-class Liberalism and the Army chiefs after it. They include many phases of opinion, partly Pacifist, partly Marxist,

and their left wing verges on Russian Bolshevism, but on the whole their "Red" tendency is somewhat academic and averse from violence. The genuine Bolsheviks who would follow the Russian model belong to the Communist Party, and their numbers are clearly much smaller than their energy. It is hard to say what positive thing the Independents would really do, if they had the power. They would socialize some industries and might set up Soviets. They put much faith in the general strike, and their main interest is to oppose the compromises of the Majority, and to combat militarism at home. They stand for the abolition of capitalist production, as all Socialists do, but, unlike some Socialists, they mean it.

The other extreme is split into two more or less harmonious wings, which "march separately," as one of their leaders put it, but "strike together." The German Nationals are the genuine Junkers, the old Monarchist Conservatives, based on the squirearchy, and the professional army. The so-called German People's Party are the old National Liberals, and they represent the industrial half of Conservatism. As Jingo as their allies, they may have a little less of their Monarchist and Protestant-Clerical tendency, for their concern is more directly with the interests of capital and rather less with the sentiment of nationalism. Both play with anti-Semitism, and both belong to that European "White Guard," which is at bottom one interest in Germany, Hungary, and Russia. Both voted against signing the Peace Treaty, and neither would pretend to observe it. Both were behind the Kappist *coup*. Their success is partly due to the lavish use of money in propaganda and the purchase of newspapers. In fact, it means much more. It is the beginning of a romantic militarist movement, based on regret for the great past, exactly the equivalent of the Napoleonic cult which after the interval of a generation produced the second Napoleonic Empire in France. The two tendencies mean plainly that all Germany hopes for a change. Some would march forward to social revolution. Others would rely on force to make Germany once more hammer instead of anvil.

The peril of this situation lies in the weakness of the Moderates. They, too, are discontented. They have no remedy in which they really believe. They may from prudence, tradition, sobriety, timidity, or lack of imagination reject either the revolutionary or the militarist way of escape. But they, too, are in prison, and chafe at their passivity. Their relative strength in the country and the Reichstag is reduced, and the sub-divisions of opinion among them make any common positive policy difficult. Most of the Majority Socialists, except, perhaps, the leaders, dislike the enforced association with the middle-class parties. Many or most of them would have preferred the adventure of an all-Socialist Government. The figures do, indeed, suggest that the two Socialist Parties (especially if one adds the Communist vote) are not very far from being a bare majority of the nation. But co-operation is apparently out of the question. Socialism is far from having suffered a rebuff. It is even on the verge of a Constitutional victory, and yet its dissensions render it impotent in Parliament. It is the Democratic Party which emerges in the worst plight, and there could be no surer sign of the acuteness of the class cleavage. This intermediate group, which included a fair number of organized workmen (*e.g.*, most of the railwaymen), and large numbers of clerks, teachers, civil servants, and "intellectuals," as well as some industrial and financial capitalists, chiefly Jews, has apparently lost to both extremes. Its workmen and the miserably poor brain-workers are evidently



voting Socialist, while its wealthier members (the Jews excepted) may think the uncompromising Right (German People's Party) a trustier defender of capital. This able party may have more influence in Parliament than its numbers would warrant, but it is plainly a spent force in the country. The "Centre" is also somewhat weakened, though it rarely loses or gains heavily, for it is the Catholic Party, and its voters join it, so to speak, at baptism. But it, too, is disunited and uncomfortable, verging on its left wing, under the discredited Erzberger, on Radicalism, while its Bavarian section is scarcely less reactionary than the Prussian Protestant Agrarians.

To complete the picture of this *malaise* and disunion even the few details available suggest that the most serious rift of all may be geographical. Prussia may produce the ugliest brand of the reaction, but on the whole Prussia is advanced. Industrial regions like the Ruhr and the Saxon black country have voted almost solidly "Red," and mainly "Independent." Indeed we expect to find that North Germany has a substantial Socialist majority. The South, more genial perhaps, but also less progressive and less industrialized, is also, if not certainly or solidly Conservative, decidedly anti-Socialist. It is this class cleavage, and not any purely provincial sentiment, which makes a further dismemberment of the German Reich a possibility, on which French intrigue plays. A riskier game not even Paris could play, for if the South were to split off and set up a "White" Catholic Monarchy under French protection, the North would become a definitely "Red" Republic. In both halves, however, there would be a formidable dissident minority, and civil war could hardly be avoided.

The most probable result of the election is, we suppose, that the old Coalition will, with some remodelling, resume office. It will not have a sufficient, perhaps not even a bare majority, and there will be fewer Liberal Democrats to bridge the violent incompatibility of Socialism with the Catholic Centre. Compromise will be more difficult than ever, for the Majority Socialists, warned by the increase of the Independent vote, may edge towards the Left, while the Centre, noting the growing strength of the Right, may move in that direction also. Once more the Coalition will fail, as Coalitions commonly do, to do anything constructive and positive, and the two extremes will continue to grow. Government will be the art of balancing between the risks of a Red general strike and a White militarist *Putsch*. How, above all, to disarm the mutinous, resentful army, how to tax rebellious wealth, how to put the spirit of work into revolutionary artizans, how to reconcile the country with the town and the North with the South, will be harder than ever.

The German elections are a grave warning to the Allies. When they turn to this enfeebled instrument to enforce an impossible Treaty, they will find it less than ever able to achieve the impossible. With their protracted blockade, their intolerable Treaty, their policy of affronts and coercion, their fantastic schemes for a generation of debt-slavery, they have made a Germany which cannot work, cannot pay, and cannot be governed. The growth of the two extremes is the proof that for every class her plight is unendurable. While all the world sinks into visible poverty, the Allies have come near destroying the most productive, the most industrious, portion of the Continent. It is from this hive of industry that with sane handling, all the locomotives and ploughs and machines that the world so urgently needs might have poured this year past in profusion, as it is from Russia, scourged by our subsidized civil wars and inva-

sions, that grain should have come to end the famine. Very late, perhaps too late, one half of the Alliance has seen one half of this mistake. Unless it unitedly repairs them both at Spa or sooner, the catastrophe will break over all Central and Eastern Europe. If both Allies will not do it, then to salve some wreck of civilization we must break the incompatible Alliance.

#### LABOR AND THE RE-CONQUEST OF IRELAND

A HISTORIAN writing on the plan of Thucydides would probably choose this moment for inserting in his account of the British Empire a Melian dialogue between the Irish railwaymen and the British Government. For we stand at the parting of the ways, and if the Government's policy is not arrested, we shall very soon be at war with Ireland as openly as Austria was at war with Hungary and Italy in the middle of last century. All the circumstances have helped to disguise the gravity of the several stages by which we have been brought to the brink of this catastrophe. We may say with Bolingbroke that in time of war armies grow into fashion among men who mean well to their country, and after war ceases men who mean ill are able to make use of them. This is what has happened to us East and West. Not one Englishman in a hundred has willed the state of things that his Government has created in Ireland. We need not recapitulate the main events: the rebellion led by Sir Edward Carson and Mr. Bonar Law, the failure to put the former, if not the latter, on trial for treason, and the miserable capitulation to their sedition; the offer of Mr. Redmond on that memorable August afternoon, an offer accepted and ultimately betrayed; the brutal mishandling of the rebellion, Mr. Lloyd George's breach of faith over the Convention, and the final surrender to Sir Edward Carson. If Mr. George had meant to kill the constitutional movement, he could not have devised a more effective policy for his purpose. His final abandonment of Liberal policy has led to anarchy, marked by outrage and murder on the one side, and flagrant lawlessness on the other. The whole series of blunders and betrayals have put us in a position in which we have about as much right to be in Ireland, judged by the tests we have applied to others during the last five years, as Germany had to be in Belgium. Finding ourselves in this position we proceed to act as Germany acted, and to set about the reconquest of the country, using tanks and all the equipment of modern war.

Suddenly the Irish railwayman puts a question which compels us all to look at the facts. "Am I, who am an Irishman, to be employed as an agent of what I regard as a foreign Government in the prosecution of war against my own people? Am I to take part in Lord Birkenhead's reconquest of my own country? Six years ago Mr. Bonar Law and other members of the present Government held that a soldier—a man who directly engages himself to the British Government—could fairly refuse to take part in keeping order in Ulster, when guns were being imported from a foreign country for resistance to the British Government. Did not Mr. Bonar Law say that the army had saved the country from "an atrocious crime," and from "deluging Ulster in blood"? I am not a soldier, but a private citizen. When did I promise to do the bidding of the British Government? In what sense am I their servant any more than a doctor or a lawyer or a man who writes books or newspaper articles? If I can be called upon to transport tanks and aeroplanes to be used against my fellow countrymen, my father and mother, my wife and children, am I not in the position of a Belgian rail-

wayman, required by an Army of Occupation to help in its task of subjugating Belgium, or like a Polish railwayman compelled by the old Prussian Government to carry munitions for use against the peasants and workmen of Posen, or a French civilian in Lille, ordered to help Germany in the war against France by making sandbags to shelter German soldiers from French bullets?"

This is the case which, in effect, the Irish railwayman puts before the British public. It is no answer to say that there are horrible murders in Ireland. There were murders in Belgium. There were horrible murders in Austria-Hungary, which reached their climax at Sarajevo. What moral did we draw? We have always seen in the case of other countries that disorder of this kind signifies that there is something wrong with the existing Government, and that disorder will not cease without political change. We are not, as the Prime Minister suggests, sending troops to Ireland to hunt down murderers. That is perfectly clear from the nature of the munitions we have there. Tanks are not employed against men like Toplis. Our aeroplanes, once they begin bombing, will not single out the criminals; they are useless for such selection, and they must be used, if used at all, for indiscriminate punishment or intimidation. In other words, these munitions are sent to Ireland because the Government are resolved to refuse Ireland her freedom. They are essentially the weapons that are used against a community. Captain Eliot, a Unionist M.P., in his admirable speech the other day compared our struggle in Ireland with Napoleon's struggle in Spain. It is our humiliation that the Government have reduced Ireland to such a plight that we have left her no liberty of which a victorious Germany could have deprived her. Mr. Lloyd George talks about "strengthening the law." That is an enlightening phrase for statesmen to use who put hundreds of men and boys into prison, without charge or trial. If the Government are anxious to preserve law and order, they might make a beginning by prosecuting their own spies for perjury when they contradict themselves so flagrantly under cross-examination that their lawyers have to throw them over. Since when has it ceased to be a crime to try to swear a man's life away, if the man is an Irishman?

The danger in Ireland is imminent. There are plenty of reckless men there, and in the existing temperature an officer like Captain Bowen Colthurst, or an incident like the shooting of a woman in the streets of Dublin in the summer of 1914, might plunge us quickly into unimagined horrors. We may thus slip into a conflict more hateful than any war in our history. How can we be saved from it? Next week the Irish railwaymen are to meet the executive of the N.U.R. in conference to discuss the state of Ireland. The form in which the question arises affects the workers more intimately than any other class of the community, for if the Irish worker is to be compelled to carry these munitions, he is liable to a *corvée* from which other classes are exempt. British Labor must therefore support the Irish refusal, and thereby incur serious consequences for British Labor, or seem to desert their Irish fellows. But the difficulties of Labor do not end there. At present an unrepresentative Government is claiming the right to use the full resources and energies of the nation in an enterprise which is really dictated by small and powerful factions. They speak of that right as democratic, as if the fact that an election held on a sham issue in 1918 gave them the right, not to hang the Kaiser or extract twenty-four millions from Germany, but to make war on Russia and Ireland.

But the nation whose resources and energies are thus commandeered has some right to make itself heard and not to be driven blindly over a precipice. How many people in England want war with Ireland? How many object to the solution which alone promises us an escape from war and from the existing anarchy? Mr. Asquith's responsibility to the nation at this crisis is clear enough: it is not discharged by a mere gesture of contempt. Lord Grey, whose anxieties on that tense August afternoon were sensibly lightened by Mr. Redmond's speech, cannot reconcile it to his conscience to keep silence any longer. There are other public men who owe a plain duty both to England and to Ireland. And Labor has an unexampled opportunity which it may well turn to account. British Labor can play a moderating part in England, and Irish Labor a moderating part in Ireland. The capital truth that stands out in all the confusion is this. The war that threatens, the anarchy that prevails, come not from the internal difficulties of the Irish situation, but from the claim made by Britain to control the government of Ireland. Abandon that claim, and Ulster and the rest of Ireland will come to terms. What sympathy can Labor have with such a policy? How can it be expected by any Government to serve or support them? Let Labor boldly demand the withdrawal of the British Army and put forward with Lord Hugh Cecil the remedy that we have been pressing by force on Russia. Either Ireland must be allowed to settle her own institutions by means of a Constituent Assembly, or we go to war with her to beat down her national spirit. Unless we make up our minds to the first of these alternatives, we shall find ourselves entangled before we know where we are in the second. And the world at large will not be greatly impressed when we explain that we were really quite liberal at heart and had proposed to give Ireland an excellent Bill which she was too stupid to appreciate.

#### THE WAR-PROFITEER'S ESCAPE.

THE decision of the Government against a levy on war-wealth stands upon the naked bed-rock of "real politics." To the vast majority of people it has seemed a monstrous thing that some thousands of clever, unscrupulous, or merely lucky business men should have come with swollen fortunes out of a war which has cost their fellow-countrymen so dear. The principle of equality of sacrifice is, of course, not strictly applicable. There can be no parity between the loss of life and the cession of a portion of unearned or extorted wealth. But to the ordinary mind it appeared a policy of obvious equity that the financial emergency left by the war should be met, so far as possible, out of war-made resources.

The "real politicians," however, who form the compact majority on which our Government depends, saw the matter in a different light, and have communicated it to the Government. Many of these elderly business men had made big money, while their young kinsmen were dying on the battlefields of France, and did not propose to part with it. They have been perfectly straightforward in the matter. They will fight not only a war-wealth levy but any other attempt to get from them any special contribution to the needs of their country. And the arguments with which Mr. Chamberlain garnished his declaration of their refusal are applicable to any of the alternatives to the proposal, the excess profits tax, a compulsory loan, a higher income tax, or a general levy upon capital. The profiteers will fight all these with the weapons which Mr. Chamberlain brandished in their defence last Tuesday. The only ones

that carried any cutting edge were those which dwelt upon the smallness of the sum which it was proposed to raise by the war-wealth levy and the length of time required to get it. For the £500,000,000, named as "practicable" by the Inland Revenue Committee, is not a tithe of the body of war-made wealth. The delay in getting this or any such sum is an argument which springs from the criminal neglect of the plainest dictates of sound finance. The Government has been in office from the termination of the war. Yet it has consistently shirked the most pressing of its duties, the immediate reduction of the body of war-indebtedness.

The argument which seemed most impressive to the opponents of the levy—the contention that it would reduce the available amount of capital required for business—is simply fallacious. As Professor Pigou pointed out in his excellent letter to the "Times," a levy to pay off war-debt could not affect the quantity of actual wealth or capital in the country available for productive purposes. All it would do would be to effect a transfer of ownership from one set of persons, taxpayers, to another, the holders of cancelled war-bonds. There would be no net reduction, either of real or of monetary capital, for business purposes. No doubt there is substance in the complaint that a levy, uncertain in amount and hanging over business men, impairs confidence in enterprise. But this complaint is applicable to every method of dealing with the dangerous financial situation in which we stand. Would any individual business man contend that the confidence and credit of his firm were injured by a special effort of economy to reduce his overdraft, or to pay off a mortgage incurred during a period of emergency?

Mr. Chamberlain dwelt with eloquence upon the apprehensions of the City, amounting almost to a panic. All this belongs to the psychological bluff which finance knows so well how to organize, when it is wanted for impressing a timid and hesitant Chancellor. Mr. Chamberlain pretends that the refusal of the levy is a general sanction for his excess profits duty and his new corporation tax. But there is no sign that the profiteers in the House or in the country are abating their opposition to these attempts to make them disgorge. Did they applaud his calculation that they would have to pay twice as much under the excess profits duty as under the proposed levy? Not at all. Why then, it may be asked, has a capital levy, restricted or general, been subject to such virulent abuse? For the simple reason that the profiteer knows that, if he parts with a lump sum, he cannot hope to get it back, whereas if it is a question of annual taxation, he can always indulge the hope of passing it on to the consumer, or of otherwise "broadening the basis of taxation." The coming years will witness a variety of expedients for enabling the rich to shift their burdens on to the poor. Their success or failure in this process is an acid test of democracy. The insidious perils which modern taxation involves are one of the impelling reasons why the Labor Party, supported by an increasing number of Liberals, demand a general capital levy, large enough sensibly to reduce the burden of annual taxation. The war-wealth levy was, in effect, a compromise upon this wider and financially sounder proposal, and its rejection must give fresh vigor to the advocacy of the latter. It is doubtless true that either sort of levy would exercise some immediate disturbing influence on industry. We have always been alive to this, as to certain other difficulties and dangers which beset such schemes. But the true criterion of value is not the "cost" of the particular proposal, but the cost of any alternative. The country

wants the money. It needs as soon as possible to reduce the volume of war-debt, and to bring the annual revenue within such a compass that it can be found, in years of depression as in those of prosperity, by a regular taxation which does not oppress any class of the community. The great argument for a levy is that in no other way can we get on to this sound basis for future finance. The alternative is to go on year after year with an income tax higher than the present, and an excess profits tax which will naturally shrink in yield as the price and profit level stops rising. This alternative will not restore confidence, or enable manufacturers and traders to make long plans ahead.

The central principle of all sound taxation is that it should be confined to sources with genuine ability to pay, and all modern modes of taxation should be considered in the light of this principle. The investigations into trusts and profiteering ought to shed most useful light upon the application of the principle. For, by revealing a number of large monetary gains, the fruit of monopoly or combination, natural, fortuitous, or contrived, it lights on a large complex surplus of unearned and unnecessary payments, possessing full ability to pay. This surplus wealth involves no useful effort of production, and yields no serviceable personal consumption. It may therefore be regarded as the natural source of all taxation, an income which, by origin and expediency, belongs to society and should be administered by the State in public services. The recent reports of the Income Tax Committee form a valuable contribution to the study of State finance, which has hitherto been neglected by most politicians as a country lying outside their province. By this time, however, it should be evident to rich and poor alike that problems of taxation so vitally affect wages, prices, profits, and commercial wealth that no class can afford to ignore them. For if they are ignored, one result is certain. Wealthy men can buy themselves into Parliament, and will use their places to shift as much as possible of the burdens of taxation on to weaker shoulders than their own. Meanwhile they vote out of the public money subsidies to agriculture and industrial enterprises. And these subsidies again come home to them and their friends in solid gains, that enable them to bear with fortitude all the taxation which they cannot shift.

## A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

THE news from India is not good, nor was it reasonable to suppose that a deeply moved Indian opinion would react well to the whitewashing of the Hunter Committee and the flow of British apologies for General Dyer. The Indian situation is far more serious than our Junkers imagine, and they, with the extremists on the other side, may drive it beyond control. Therefore it is that a gesture of appeasement, in the sense of Mr. Montagu's despatch, but more precise and determined, is so necessary. Lord Chelmsford's responsibility for all that has happened is undeniable; and the inadequacy of his defence is equally clear. But he nears the end of his term; and India's concern is not with him but with his successor. How to smooth the path of the new Viceroy? It will not be easy. The Rowlatt Acts must go, for so long as the reforms proceed under their shadow there will be no peace, and they may suffer much the same fate as Sinn Fein threatens for the Irish Bill. It is



possible that a way may be found through the coming visit of the Prince of Wales. The Prince's Imperial round has hitherto been rather a trivial affair; but he has grace and intelligence, and if he goes to India as the harbinger of conciliation and the bearer of a definite promise of a liberal rule, India may yet kindle to a generous reply. But there is an odious spirit abroad, and unless Mr. Montagu can bend it, it will break him.

THE last week or so has seen a slight—only a slight—re-orientation of our politics. For the first time since the second Coalition was formed the Prime Minister has moved in or near his old orbit. The policy of peace with Russia is, of course, popular, as must be every effort to escape from the *maison de santé* in which the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain have shut our statesmanship up. The problem to-day is feeding not fighting, and every acre that can be won back for the plough is so much childhood and manhood snatched from death. Therefore, so far as the new Russian policy goes, Mr. George stands on ground from which not a hundred raving Northcliffes can move him—if only he stands firm. But he is so unstable, the stuff of this Parliament, moral and intellectual, is so desperately poor, and the war has planted so many seeds of blind hatred in men's hearts, that one can never be sure that even now the hungry millions—even if they be of our blood—will not be sent empty away. Therefore it is that for the moment Labor and Liberalism feel bound to rally to the Prime Minister's side.

I HOPE there is no truth in the rumor of an imminent breakdown of the Krassin negotiations. But clearly there are points of peril. In the midst of them comes the news that Wrangel's army, which has been nursed into strength by Lord Curzon and Mr. Long on the gross pretence that we were merely anxious about Denikin's refugees, has been refitted and reorganized under our guns, and launched against the Bolsheviks. Here, therefore, the treachery and falsehood which go with every step in this Russian affair, have done their accustomed work, without, I suppose, bringing a blush to Lord Curzon's face when he makes his demand (as he is said to have made it) for "guarantees" against the Bolshevik retort in Persia. In fact, Denikin's army has been evacuated with our aid into the Crimea. With what purpose? To make a second Gibraltar, with Sevastopol as the centre? Certainly to give Wrangel time and means to organize a second offensive. But that is not the whole trouble. If our Government has made political or economic demands on the Bolsheviks which they cannot accept without abdication, it must either be because Mr. George never meant the negotiation to go through, or because the Curzon-Churchill group, with the French and the "Times" behind them, design, at all costs, to destroy it. I cannot credit the first theory, for Mr. George's fortunes hang on a successful economic deal, if on nothing more, and such a manœuvre must utterly confound it. On the second theory the Prime Minister's policy has been hamstrung from the first by the stroke of the infatuate fools who are running the world to ruin. For there can be no doubt that the Economic conversations have gone well, and that there is gold and grain in Russia—about a million tons of wheat are said to be available for export—and that a good ready-money trade can be opened with her, with some concessions on the debt as the price of a general understanding. Then, in the existing food conditions, what statesman dares take the responsibility of shutting out an avenue of new supplies?

ONE good thing the new Russian policy has revealed and that is the weakening power of the Northcliffe Press. The "Times" foams and frets away, but few mark it. Abroad its power for evil is hardly abated. The new "Times" carries over the stock-in-trade of the old, and though much of its intellectual authority is gone, its range of suggestion and permeation has increased. But at home the Northcliffe Press reverts to something like its pre-war insignificance. It is "demobbed." War's yeasty turmoil over, it has gone back to the sweet peas and the spirits, and there, I think, it will stay. For Lord Northcliffe, though his mind trips over the surface of things much as little Gulliver played on the spinet in Brobdingnag by running along the keyboard, lacks political knowledge and ideas. His life study has not been in politics, but in "best sellers," and how to suit them to the tastes of kitchen and drawing-room. Certainly his latest editor has political ideas in plenty, though they rarely happen to be intelligent ones.

BAD Ideas and No Ideas have now combined to trip the Prime Minister's heels. Mr. George's capital sin is not that he has bungled a Treaty, but that he has been rude to Lord Northcliffe, and for that he must pay the appropriate penalty. One would gladly discover some public purpose in these anti-Georgian tirades of the "Times," for a critical Press is the next best thing to an independent Parliament. But I can see none. You know where to have the "Post"; it is a sincere and steady obscurantist. But the "Times" is consistent in nothing but its hatred of the Prime Minister. To-day it is mad for economy, the next day, and indeed every day, it is for sinking millions on its anti-Bolshevist craze. It even promotes a costly prank of militarism, like the return to scarlet and bearskins for the British Army. It coquets with Labor, and yet harbors every political force that Labor most hates. And its deliberate marshalling of French Nationalism to attack a British Minister shows, not for the first or the second time, that it reckes as little of patriotism as of the claims of humanity.

WHILE the Government prepares the reconquest of Ireland, and our new Henry II. despatches ship after ship, carrying fresh regiments and stores, Sinn Fein is busy consolidating its dominion. I imagine it has now attained a more complete capture of the local than of the Parliamentary representation. And the "incidents" continue. Without a shot fired, the Dublin volunteers capture a military station, and amid the applause of the onlookers hold up the garrison and remove its store of arms and munitions. I am told that the Sinn Fein courts are spreading, and developing a full system of parish, district, and appeal tribunals. Barristers and solicitors appear before them, while the Royal Courts are deserted, and the new jurisdiction extends not merely to the remote and thinly peopled counties of the West and South, but to fat and prosperous districts of the East like Kilkenny and Kildare. Its friends boast that they stamp out theft and agrarian disorder, and wage war against illicit distilling, shut the public-houses at reasonable hours, and even keep an eye on "welshers" on the race-courses.

THE comedy of the situation appears in the efforts of this people's law to make punishment fit, not merely the crime, but the lawgiver's power of enforcing it. Thus the other day a burglary occurred at the Duc de Stacpoole's house. The volunteers found the property and the burglars and condemned the latter to a term of hard labor on the Stacpoole estate. I am told that the landlord accommodated the two culprits with a cottage and

they are now working compulsorily on his farm. This form of sentence is said to be common, combined with reparation for damage. Imprisonment is sometimes imposed, but deportation of undesirables is rather more usual. For example, a prisoner was sent over for a week to Scattern Island, which lies mid-stream in the Shannon. A more amusing case occurred where two men were convicted and put across to an outlying desert island off the West coast. The police heard of it and set out in a boat to rescue and convey them back. The marooned culprits indignantly protested that they were subjects of the Irish Republic and refused to have anything to do with the "other Government's" police.

IN spite of all denials, it can hardly be questioned that Mr. Balfour's attempt at Rome to get a Papal pronouncement against Sinn Fein, or perhaps I should say the Republican movement in Ireland, has completely failed. Mr. Balfour wanted that, and also, it is said, a voice in the appointment of the Irish Bishops. He failed in both quests. The Pope thanked him for his call; but there was nothing doing.

EUROPE to-day is little more than a prison-house of Right; but the deeds of the Roumanians in Transylvania deserve a special chapter in her book of shame. I suppose that in spite of their lying protestations, there is not a single Article of the Convention for the protection of minorities which the Supreme Council drew up and their Governments signed that they have not broken. Thus they pledged themselves to give the inhabitants protection for life and liberty, and the free exercise of their religion. I am assured by British and Hungarian witnesses that no Hungarian in the annexed territory has any such protection. He is liable to arrest at any moment on any pretext, and can only regain his freedom by paying blackmail to the corrupt officials. If a clergyman is arrested, his flock has to pay ransom. As for security of property, the term is a mockery. The Hungarian landowners have lost most of the land they possessed. But these thefts are mere unprofitable loot. These miserable savages, who steal the carefully tended horses, cows, and oxen, are too lazy and ignorant to tend them, and they die by the thousand. Thus some twenty thoroughbreds, robbed from a well-known stud and transported to Roumania by rail, all perished from starvation. The land fares no better. It is either left wholly uncultivated or worked so superficially that it fails to produce to a third or a fourth of its capacity. The criminal waste of looted machinery is as bad as that of the live stock and the starved and neglected soil. The railway lines in Transylvania are blocked with the *débris* of engines, boilers, wheels, tenders, piled up in heaps and broken and exposed to ruin; while organized gangs pillage the sidings and carry off everything they please. Countless schools have been closed, including the University of Kolozsvár; the teaching of Hungarian history is forbidden; and even school-boys have been imprisoned and tortured. This is the lot of one of the most famous of European nationalities at the hands of one of the meanest.

It is thought to be quite probable that the real "dark horse" among the Republican candidates for the American Presidency will prove to be Mr. Hughes, and that if he is chosen, and unites the party, a Republican success is almost certain.

I SUPPOSE there never was a measure before the House of Commons which commanded such universal

assent as the Plumage Bill. Yet some mysterious agency against which the powers of the whole of the British Isles seems quite ineffective, contrives again and again to keep the neck of the trade out of the halter. What is it? The trade opposition, tenacious and unscrupulous as it is, can scarcely account for it. What Mr. Montagu calls "this pernicious trade" is now generally recognized as such. The reason is the extraordinary procedure of the House of Commons. The Committee-stage of the Bill had ten pages of amendments to consider, some of them self-contradictory, others dealing with the trivialities of changing "this" into "the," and so on, and all of them, except the two accepted by the promoters of the Bill, deliberately and glaringly obstructive. On Tuesday, when the Committee was held, the tactics of the opposition were further revealed. The opponents would pause in the middle of a sentence, and then repeat it and pause again, and again repeat it. At the rate of business done, it would take about a year of daily sittings to reach the last of the amendments. The Plumage Bill, then, can never go through? Via Parliamentary procedure—never. But is the bird-life of the world to be wiped out for fashion, because a man repeats an evasion ten times over and talks nothings for an hour?

A WAYFARER.

## Life and Letters.

### MALTHUS UP TO DATE.

MORE than a hundred years ago the famous "Essay on Population" was launched anonymously as an explosive tract upon the world. The impeachment of God rather than of kings and tyrants as responsible by a paradoxical law for the miseries of the world excited fury amongst the Radicals of his age. Cobbett termed the author "Parson Malthus" because, as he declared, he could think of no more insulting epithet. Hazlitt, while exonerating the blameless Professor of History at Haileybury College from the passions of anger, pride, and avarice, accused him of being the "slave to an amorous complexion," and of believing all other men to be made "of the same combustible materials." The recipient of such onslaughts continued equably on his way, asserting that he was "never vexed after the first." He continued to sadden men who believed in a future age of golden happiness. Man (he said) increases by geometrical progression. Man's food and supply increase only by arithmetical progression. In most countries at present—so ran his contention—in all countries in the future, men are therefore brought up by the blind instinct of desire against conditions which leave them fighting in vain for a sufficient supply of food. The only remedies for such a condition are war, famine, pestilence, which are Nature's remedies; vice, which is one of men's; moral restraint, which is another. Lacking these, in the vision of his logical followers, all improvement of material condition is only intensifying the torment of mankind. For that improvement produces immediate response in an increase in reproduction and a reduced mortality; and the "swarm" once more beats against the inexorable limits of the cage. The late comers, as Malthus declared in the suppressed passage of the first essay, at "Nature's mighty feast," find the "table is already full," and "the unbidden guests are left to starve." Such were the contentions of a quiet clergyman philosopher. They startled or saddened a whole generation of reformers, and, through their influence upon the mind of Darwin,

produced the "Origin of Species" and transformed the thought of the world.

The central doctrine of the creed of Malthus is now being examined in the light of changes which his opponents and his supporters would alike have regarded as incredible when the controversy first arose. They are changes in the external world outside man, in invention, human discovery, the control of power and blind matter and forces which, although he cannot understand, he can command to do his bidding. There are greater changes in the mind of man himself, in his attitude towards the production of progeny, in his refusal to accept the assertion of the elder Mirabeau that "given the means of subsistence men will multiply like rats in a barn." An extraordinarily interesting and serious discussion of these problems is found in the second volume of the Report and Evidence of the National Birth-Rate Commission, published to-day under the title of "Problems of Population and Parenthood" (Chapman & Hall). This voluntary Committee of men and women of distinction have deserved high honor for the devotion they have shown in the attempts to probe fearlessly into the neglected questions of human birth-rate and the influence of various forces upon it. Their report is a mine of information, their witness a challenge to a hundred problems and their solution.

Examining it, we can see at once how the central core of the Malthusian theory has collapsed. On the one hand, the theory of geometrical progression in race increase and arithmetical progression in products has vanished; and with that theory, the whole nightmare which weighed so heavily on the minds of those who worked for race ideals. It still prevails, by the operation of the law of diminishing returns, in such regions as Malthus saw it working in, Ireland and India, where an increasing population is limited to a definite piece of ground which cannot be tilled and fertilized into unlimited productivity. From such a plot an Irish peasant could just manage to raise a crop sufficient to maintain a family in semi-starvation. If the land were divided among the children, they were in hopeless ruin. To-day, it is calculated that on the wheat lands of Canada the work of six men in one year will produce sufficient corn and carry it to any of the great cities of the world to feed during that year a thousand persons. And only a fraction of the wheat lands of Canada has even been scratched. The same out-running of population by produce is everywhere manifest, where one man, by pressing a button or tending a machine, may turn out clothes or boots in greater quantity than the laborious toil of five hundred workers when Malthus first wrote his essay. Economists like Mr. Harold Cox and Mr. J. M. Robertson may declare to the Commission—in the words of the former—that "if birth control is banned as immoral, we shall be forced to choose between various methods of death encouragement, such as infanticide, chronic underfeeding, periodic massacres, and the propagation of deadly diseases," or, in the contention of the latter, that no duty is laid upon this country to lower our standards of life in order to produce swarms of children to fill up waste spaces of the Empire. But it would seem that, even apart from birth control, experience has shown that the Christian Malthus, in his pessimism, was less correct in his forecast than old Godwin, the atheist, with his boundless optimism, who replied to him that there was plenty of room on earth at present, and that though the population may increase through myriads of centuries there will still be plenty.

But the encouragement caused by the spectacle of limitless production is of far less importance

than the change which has taken place in men's minds. An increasing number of millions every year are acquiring knowledge which means a complete and deliberate defeat of Nature's demand for limitless fecundity. And amongst all except the members of those religions which regard all artificial birth control as a crime, the family is coming to be regulated without that "moral restraint" which Malthus, although preaching it as an ideal, practically acknowledged to be impossible for the mass of mankind. More than any schemes of conquerors, migrations, or all previous transformation of mankind, this universal knowledge is destined to bring great changes upon the world. The main subject of controversy now centres round the question whether such control is to be approved or condemned. To the assertion that it is "unnatural" the advocates demonstrate the "unnaturalness" of the whole ethical process, as by Huxley in the famous Romanes lecture. If men can cheat nature of the waste and misery created by its impulse for multiplication of type, man is in the tradition in which he has lifted himself from the ape and tiger. It is "natural," as one witness says, for married life in many women to be one long disease—the "disease of excessive procreation," almost inevitably accompanied by high infant mortality. That is all in harmony with a world process which scatters innumerable seeds that one may bear, and is content that "a thousand types are gone." To-day, again, the opponents of birth control demand large families partly to repair the ravages of war, partly to people unoccupied lands with the British race, partly again because the nations or creeds which exercise birth control seem destined to be swarmed out and suffocated by those who refuse it. In the first case the argument is so naive as to be almost satirical. "In the event of a war similar to that which we have just experienced, what would happen to us with a greatly reduced birth-rate? Surely all we have would be taken, and we must become slaves." To any such demand for breeding cannon fodder the women of Europe will give but one reply. You say we must breed children to be killed in future wars. We say that if you cannot avert such wars, we will breed no children. Let the race perish that acquiesces in such criminal lunacy—and in a huge madhouse only the madmen remain.

More serious, however, is the effect of birth control on different classes and nations. There is overwhelming evidence that the deliberate limitation of the family is strongest in the educated, professional, and skilled artizan classes, and scarcely operative as yet amongst the mass who live by the day and for the day only. It would seem, therefore, that men are deliberately destroying the stock which is most likely to produce citizens of physical excellence and intellectual vigor and ambition. The human will prevents a generation of strong will power from ever entering the world. Those without will or intelligence multiply. The result is the very opposite to the figures which formed the hard core of the theory of Malthus. Yesterday, whenever you increased the standard of comfort, the result was increased multiplication of children with an immediate lowering of that standard of comfort again. To-day, when you increase the standard of comfort you immediately decrease the multiplication of children, a paradox which would lead a perfectly prosperous world to produce no children at all. This, indeed, happened in the Rome of Tacitus, who lashed his audience to fear as he contrasted the prolific swarm of the barbarian families in the dim northern forests with the refusal of the Roman mother to bring children into the world. We also have the "barbarian" in prolific multiplication, and the Anglo-Saxon stock, as Mr. Havelock Ellis has pointed out, obviously dying



throughout the world. It is dying, not for lack of fecundity, but by the exercise of birth control. Australia lives in comfort by excluding immigration and limiting the family. Can it maintain its vast spaces in contentment with its meagre population in face of the awakened ambition of a too prolific East? The Roman Catholic Church, as against the Protestant or the Agnostic; the Jews, Indians, Chinese, as against the united European races, these seem destined in a few generations to gain preponderance. To that, again, it may be queried—What if they do? Who wastes a sleepless night to rejoice or regret over what the world will be like in two hundred generations? The contemporaries of Malthus did so, and could be strangely moved by such reflections, like John Stuart Mill, whose youth was saddened by the challenge, "When all the reforms you desire have been accomplished, what then?" But we live in a less robust age. The most public-spirited are almost content with the petition, "Give Peace in our time, O Lord." The majority have been so numbed by war and its ravages as to ask for little but some tranquillity before they die.

#### THE ROCK CATHEDRAL.

In the west of England, where there are so many tall church towers with red roofs clustered at their base, like hens with young broods running loose in a wide pasture, there is a cathedral not built with human hands. It is cut out of the side of the limestone Mendips, and in prehistoric times was no doubt a sea-cavern, whose roof fell in with the action of the waves. Out of the massive, battlemented rocks of this cathedral rise its pinnacles up to four hundred feet sheer from the ground, and the graveyard—or cloister-garth, if we wish to speak more elegantly—is economically built into the walls, since the limestone is a conglomerate mass of petrified life, a vast biographical museum of a world which had not yet conceived the sombre idea of man. The parapets, gables, screens, arcades and canopies of this great church have been cut by the first Architect out of their own element, and the carvings and traceries—the grace of strength, the delicacy of grandeur—are the ivy, hawthorn, ash, birch and creeping plant that lace the sheer walls. Before the deep gorge with the cliffs soaring on either side is reached, one passes through a straggling village, and beyond it come the caves, plastered over with tin shanties, refreshment booths, advertisement posters, and a loathsome white pagoda conspicuous for miles round. On the other side of the street runs a dirty little mud and ginger-beer-bottle-encumbered brook, occasionally broadening into pools, so that on one side we have Victorian picturesqueness a little damaged and on the other a transplanted Earl's Court Exhibition—two civilizations nagging their superior advantages at each other. Then, suddenly round a corner towers a third, which will remain when these showy little fellows have passed away, and stood there, impregnable and lofty, æons before the Magdalenian worthy of river-bed type, whose skull reposes in a glass case making money for his descendants, chipped his flints and strewed Elephas Primigenius on the floor of a cave that knew not, as it does now, electric light. Here were solitude and concentrated silence, broken only by the bright voices of the daws, whose cries, shrill and metallic in the hollow between the cliffs, went spinning and leaping from crag to crag. The contrast was theatrical, the unassailable, precipitous rocks seeming to gibe down upon the dwarfed face of our gimcrack modernism.

When I walked up the gorge in spring, the shrubs and ivy and minute trees were clothed in their first

tender leaf, as though the solid cliff had blossomed, and their fragility and delicacy of form and color against the gaunt walls of grey primeval rock were so beautiful that "the sense faints picturing them." Gazing upon this miracle, and thinking of the huckstering going on fifty yards away, one could not but be tranquillized by an assurance that treasures of loneliness do lie dormant in the hard heart of man, and that they will one day sprout like the "glad light grene" from the face of this bare rock.

I was disturbed from these sentimental flights by a more material one—the flight of an old friend of Magdalenian man, the hero of so many dark legends, and doomed very soon now to reside like him in a glass case. The rock-churches of nature are now almost everywhere sacked of their ecclesiastics, raven, kite, buzzard, and eagle, and one has to be content with the choir-boys, kestrel, daw, and pie. Yet this cathedral had its attendant priest, for the raven was nesting not a hundred yards from his human prehistoric contemporary. The nest was two hundred feet up the rock in a natural cleavage, sheltered above by overhanging boulders, and projecting over the platform—inaccessible, one would have thought, even to the collector who is always so ready to break other people's necks to fill his cabinets with egg-shells. Though the birds were sometimes five hundred feet above me, the beat of the wings was always audible, and when they half-closed their vans and dropped a hundred feet sheer before catching themselves up by a rapid shooting out of them, the noise was like a wind. Now and then, both birds alighted on the bluff opposite their nest, and caressed each other, the male locking mandibles with his mate and swaying gently with her, or nibbling at the hairs at the base of her bill. They were seldom silent, and while the hen bird was on the nest, her mate floated above the cliffs with primaries outspread, like the fingers of a hand, uttering his loud, rumbling bark-growl-croaks, like a bishop reading the Litany. The sounds went tumbling down the gullies and against the bastions of the steeped rock, "ancestral voices, prophesying war." There is something in us which responds to the raven in his natural haunts, as men with a great literature behind us in which he plays his grim part, because his aloofness and majesty are an expression in terms of life of desert places which owe nothing to us and our machines, and because, in the words of Taylor, the water-poet, he is "old, old, very old," older even than ourselves, who took our human form a million years ago. The tragedy of mankind is not a little thing, but it takes a belittling shape—and a tragedy without rhythm and dignity is a pitiful thing indeed. The raven is essentially a tragic bird, in his shape and color, in the nature of his fastnesses, in his fierce temper, in his associations, and in the gloomy destiny he has suffered at our hands. But he is no more vulgar with it than the lonely places he inhabits, and of which he is the living symbol, and the sight of him recaptures for us the commingled tragedy and sublimity of the human story.

As I came down the gorge, I saw something which for grandeur and awe outpaced even the ravens. A few daws were sporting and soaring and dashing headlong like tumbler pigeons among the cliffs when a great company of them suddenly rose into sight from the hills opposite me in a compact body—fully half a thousand of them—ringing out their crisp, detonating cries in loud unison. Then, with nothing visible or audible to account for it, they formed into a thick column so quickly that the eye could not follow the change of position, and hurled themselves obliquely across the ravine with such

speed that the roar of their wings was that of huge breakers in a lofty sea-cavern. The experience was so extraordinary—the uniformity and precision of this precipitate flight, its incredible velocity, the tornado of cries from five hundred throats, the rush of five hundred black bodies across the sky, and the mighty thundering of the wings—that a botanist I was walking with, filled with the divine fire of having viewed a pink which grew in the gorge and nowhere else in Great Britain, shouted with the excitement of it and talked of nothing else for the rest of the way. Nothing but violent terror or a rapture so intense as to demand a furious expression of it, could have caused so strange an upheaval.

So back from the surge and thunder of the daws' Odyssey to the rustic bridge, the white pagoda and the ginger-beer bottles. It seems a queer thing that we should have to pass through the one to reach the other—that for the human mind to grasp the value and wonder of creation, its power and intensity and abundance, its manifoldness in uniformity, its intricacy in coherence, its flux and diversity in persistence and continuity, it must penetrate every ugliness and folly. But so it is and such is the meaning of the progress whose tangle confuses us to deny it. We cannot know our gain until we have tasted the full bitterness of its loss.

H.

## The Drama.

### THE BEGGAR'S OPERA.

A FEW months before the war a single act of "The Beggar's Opera" was given in the course of a miscellaneous entertainment—called "How they did it"—at the Little Theatre. The effect was extraordinary. An audience which had apathetically followed the gambolings of those who had been imitating Mrs. Siddons and the Kembles suddenly grew alert and enthusiastic. That, to me, was the first proof that "The Beggar's Opera" had any spark of life in its body. Since then I have desired to see the whole of the play, and to hear all the ballads contained in it; and if the performance at the Lyric Theatre, Hammersmith, does not supply quite that imagined completeness it comes very near to doing so. The text has been cut for the sake of brevity only (and could be cut with advantage, I think, in two or even three other places where the dialogue flags, or repeats itself, and where, although the dance is charming, four chained prisoners unnecessarily execute a *pas de quatre* at the end of an act). It is sung and acted with tremendous enjoyment by a cast of high quality. And the scenery and costumes are admirable. The costumes represent, I think, the best thing of the kind that I have seen in London; because they are bright and simple without being crude, and they do not obtrude themselves at the expense of the play. The scene, which overcomes many difficulties of staging, is astonishingly appropriate throughout, and is free from the mechanical preciousness of so much recent experimentation.

Whether some modern allusions have indeed crept into the text I do not know; but the point, directed against the procedure in Government offices, which most diverted the house at the second performance does not appear to be in my copy of the book. But most of the other points are there, and the dialogue, coarse and free from sentimentality, is most happily rendered in the theatre. It is full of robust sense about most things in life. It is directed against the venal and the prurient, and it is charged with ironic artlessness so delicious that one yields wholly to its charm. There is a kind of truth about it that seems in the hearing to be wit, something that is far from cynicism, but belongs to reality and not to illusion or convention. When Peachum, greeting

Mrs. Trapes, says: "Dear Mrs. Di, your servant. One may know by your kiss, that your gin is excellent," and Mrs. Trapes replies, pleased, "I was always very curious in my liquors . . . Fill it up. I take as large draughts of liquor as I did of love. I hate a flincher in either," one feels that there is a simple coarseness about such talk which leaves nothing further to be said. It belongs to life and is of a piece with it. Indeed, "The Beggar's Opera" is a very natural mixture of coarseness and refinement, of the base and the beautiful; and for that reason alone it would have its justification. It has more than that, however. The ballads, accompanied as they are by a small orchestra which includes a harpsichord, are exquisite. Some of them bear too great a family likeness to the rest; but on the whole they are as diverse as they are cunning. They form a real miscellany of songs of their period, for the airs are mostly taken from older airs; but whether they are solos or duets or part-songs—grave or gay, or expressive of some problem of conduct, such as "How happy could I be with either"—they are all enchanting. And, very amusingly, they are singularly appropriate. They occur when the characters, one feels, must break into song or express themselves in some manner still more vehement. They burst, as it were, from full hearts. It is no wonder that Mrs. Peachum, upon learning that Polly is married to Macheath, sings ragingly (to the tune of "Oh, London is a fine town"):

"Our Polly is a sad slut! nor heeds what we have taught her,  
I wonder any man alive will ever rear a daughter!  
For she must have both hoods and gowns and hoops to swell her pride,  
With scarfs and stays, and gloves and lace; and she will have men beside;  
And when she's drest with care and cost, all tempting, fine, and gay,  
As men should serve a cucumber, she flings herself away!"

She proceeds, with fine realism: "You baggage! You hussy! You inconsiderate jade! Had you been hanged, it would not have vexed me, for that might have been your misfortune; but to do such a mad thing by choice!" And all this is not only not offensive, but astonishingly in key with the whole moral scheme of the play, which is exact and priceless. You may have a play about what Goldsmith's rascal calls the "low," and you may have it crammed full of what the pathetic puzzled will call immorality; and still it will be for all time a racy and illuminating picture of human nature. Gay, like Mrs. Trapes, "hates a flincher," because he is strong enough to laugh at the spectacle of human beings in action. He is strong enough, and brave enough, to hail the venal where he sees it, and to present it obliquely, through the medium of a genuine satiric richness. Mrs. Peachum demands if her daughter can "support the expense of a husband," if she has "money enough to carry on the daily quarrels of man and wife about who shall squander most?" She adds "There are not many husbands and wives who can bear the charges of plaguing one another in a handsome way. If you *must* be married, could you introduce nobody into our family but a highwayman? Why, thou foolish jade, thou wilt be as ill-used, and as much neglected, as if thou hadst married a lord!" This is satire, a satire that springs from an ironic and heroic love of the human, such as we get in Fielding. It is without savagery, it is not the poignant satire of Swift; but it is more endearing, and it is in that respect that it resembles Fielding. For that reason, also, "The Beggar's Opera" captivates us. The audience was laughing all the evening, simply because of the irrepressible, rascally good humor of those upon the stage and their unsoured and unquestioning acceptance of baseness and simplicity as ingredients in character.

I must not fail to mention that Mr. Frederic Austin's Peachum lent far more than its individual excellence to the production. It set the tone to the whole performance. Miss Nelis, Miss French, Miss Marquesita, Mr. Ranalow, Mr. Wynn, and Mr. Heather, were all magnificent; but Mr. Austin, better than anybody else, had caught the spirit of "The Beggar's Opera," and

his unscrupulous benevolence was of inestimable value. We knew he had a heart of gold and a freedom from sophistication, and that he was a man of honor and humor and sagacity. We knew, in fact, that he was a complete and adorable scoundrel, and we loved him for it.

FRANK SWINNERTON.

## Art

### THE SINCERITY OF CAMILLE PISSARRO.

THE epithet that comes first and last to the mind in response to the memory of the exhibition of Camille Pissarro's work at the Leicester Galleries is "sincere." Sincerity is a difficult word. One understands that it is tabooed among artists; they are too often faced with the accusation of insincerity merely because their work is unfamiliar. One remembers that according to Ruskin Whistler flung a paint-pot in the face of the public. Therefore, one uses the word sincerity with hesitation, looking round the while for another. No other comes. With Pissarro sincerity seems not to be an adjunct of other virtues; the word is apt to his uniqueness. The test of its aptness is that the sensibility insists on it long before the mind has brought up its reserve of argument and analysis.

In this article the mind must have its innings, for the work of the mind is to establish communication between sensibilities. By attempting to analyze the quality in Pissarro's work which I have separated for myself under the name of sincerity, I may awake in others a recognition of a quality which passes with them under another name. Perhaps even between us we may succeed in making what I admit to be a dangerous word perform a useful function in the world of art.

I take it that the creation of a work of art involves two processes. There is the feeling of an æsthetic emotion; there is what is commonly called the expression of the emotion, which is the building up of a structure which will arouse in a stranger the emotion which the artist felt. Without pausing to consider the nature of this original æsthetic emotion—a question about which we may bang our heads against the wall for days with more excitement than profit—we can see that the conception of sincerity can be made to bear a meaning in relation to both these processes. Nothing is easier, for instance, than for an artist to persuade himself that he has an emotion which he does not really feel; super-induced emotion is one of the commonest phenomena in our modern life of multiple production. I admit that the psychology of a spurious æsthetic emotion is exceedingly difficult and obscure; but the fact, alas, is there. My memory reverberates with innumerable "How wonderful!" crooned in the placid silence of art galleries while I was a sedate and painstaking journeyman of criticism. But how, says my logical friend, do you distinguish between a genuine and a spurious æsthetic emotion? For the life of me I cannot answer. I think I know.

The distinction of sincere and insincere in the second process comes in to help me. An artist who has experienced a genuine æsthetic emotion is faced with a definite problem in expression. However unskilled he may be, he can square up to his problem. If he has been thrilled by some queer conjuncture of hill and sea and a faint thread of coastline, he will not be afraid of it. All that he can discover concerning their relations, all that the most minute investigation of the elements of their wholeness can reveal to him, is germane to his argument. His sincerity will then consist in his having pushed his inquiry to the limit of his own capacity. He will have tried specifically to reconstruct the whole which has moved him. He will not endeavor to slur over the places where his patience, his skill, or his vision have failed him. In short he will not try to bluff his audience or himself. His emotion may have been romantically tinged, there will be no romantic vagueness in the structure of his expression.

On the other hand, the victim of spurious emotion is bound to bluff. His emotion has no relation to a cause; if he attempts to probe it, to analyze its occasion, it will collapse like a pricked bubble. Generally, he has recourse to a manner. He is vaguely emotional about this and that, and to avoid the discovery that it is all hocus-pocus he proceeds to remember how this and that were painted by So-and-so. In the old days, I fancy, it was easier than it is now for him to sit down and draw this and that like an efficient camera. The camera has driven many third-rate artists into the emptiest of second-hand "-isms." They are very foolish. Few people are born with a profound capacity for æsthetic emotion, and there can be few better ways of gradually acquiring a certain amount of aptitude than by honestly copying Nature. Besides, a new movement of Dutch naturalistic painting with contemporary life for its model instead of costume and tushery would have the merit of novelty.

But these speculations are beside the mark. What matters for the moment is that sincerity in art is twofold, sincerity in emotion and sincerity in expression. Either might exist without the other. Our neo-Dutch painters would (at first at least) display the second sincerity without the first; there are a few painters whom I could name who have the first without the second. But in order that the first and final impression made upon us in an artist's work should be one of sincerity we must assume an element of failure. Sincerity is, it is true, essential to perfect achievement; but perfect achievement seems to render the epithet "sincere" unnecessary. We use the word "beauty" with assurance and neglect the conditions and the process. It is a persistent consciousness of effort which provokes the word sincere, just as a consciousness of effort shirked provokes the word insincere.

This persistent consciousness of effort pursues the investigator of Camille Pissarro's work. We feel that he pressed on by a double, unremitting struggle, first to refine his emotion into something which he could possess surely, and second to articulate the solid residue of this emotion by pursuing it, as it were, into the very interstices of the real. He is, in fact, a clumsy Cezanne, whose emotions were a little less, whose technique was a little less, mastered than Cezanne's. But, like Cezanne, he would have subscribed wholly to the ideal of "making of Impressionism an art as durable as that of the museums." And what is so thrilling, so profoundly exhilarating for an artist in any kind is to watch his plodding ascent through the years at the Leicester Galleries—a plodding ascent, but with sudden leaps of technical discovery and emotional grip. To go round the first room in order slowly to be caught by a little gasp of delighted surprise at the assured luminousness that pervades the structural strength of the "Moulin de Knocke" (No. 47), painted in 1894. You were hardly prepared for that.

But instead of a succession of repeated and mannered successes, the labor immediately begins again. The scope of the effort is almost almost immediately enlarged. "Baigneuses" (No. 82), painted two years later, is obviously something too big to tackle, yet tackled just because it is too big. The problem of painting those nudes in the way Pissarro had determined to paint them, because he was convinced it was the honest way, was assuredly tremendous. We feel that the last effort has been lavished upon them, and that they were abandoned only when the painter's hand began to tremble because of the intensity of his effort to realize, to define, to make exact his own vision. It is a very monument of artistic sincerity. I can think of no precise parallel to it in literature, though I feel that Gissing might be made to provide one. It is a picture that exhales a tonic strength for any practising artist.

There follow what I conceive to be the two most perfect pictures in the exhibition, "Lever du Soleil à Rouen" (No. 89), painted in 1898, and "Portail de St. Jacques, Dieppe" (No. 88), painted in 1901. The artist, as it seems to me, had found the exact limit of his powers, and had determined where the line lay beyond which he



could not pass. The problems of emotion and expression are not so bewilderingly multifarious as they were in "Baigneuses." He has, by a perceptible degree, simplified the issue. He has set his aim precisely at the limit of what he could certainly achieve. For a moment the consciousness of effort almost departs, but not wholly. One has combined with the sense of a perfect achievement the sense that the artist has just staggered to it. But he is, precisely and indubitably, there.

The affinity with Cezanne imposes itself; it affords a revelation of the technical subtlety of the Master of Aix. In expression, in sheer ability to reconstruct the real in paint, Cezanne, in memory—for there are no Cezannes in England—seems always to have been able to do what Pissarro just failed to accomplish. He is always a little more durable, a little more subtle, a little more exquisite in perception. But they come from the same stock, and Pissarro is, in many senses, a key to Cezanne. Unlocking him by this key we discover the very profound contrast with Renoir, who seems to have worked further and further away from the real, and to have found his freedom only in the realm of a pure plastic imagination. Pissarro and Cezanne are the realists. One can always learn more from a realist, and to that extent it is right and just that Cezanne should be the modern master *par excellence*. But a subtle doubt will insinuate itself into the mind of anyone who studies the Pissarros at the Leicester Galleries and remembers, as he will, the more perfect Cezannes in which Pissarro's intentions were achieved. He will wonder whether the Cezanne from whom so much contemporary painting honestly professes to derive was the real Cezanne at all, whether there has not been somewhere a substitution, whether, in fact, the sincerity which distinguishes that master as greatly if less obtrusively than Pissarro has not been lost in transit in the journey across the Channel.

JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY.

## Communications.

### THE ECLIPSE OF NONCONFORMITY.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—One of the most disquieting results of the war is the depressed vitality of the Free Churches. It was, perhaps, inevitable that while the war lasted they should suffer from confusion and stagnation.

It was a time of bitter misery, of questionings and general hardening of hearts, and our only hope was that when the war was over Nonconformity would recover its belief in spiritual forces, forget its hatreds, and take a hand in reconstructing and saving society. Everyone saw that this would be very difficult, and I heard Dr. Jowett, in a sermon at the City Temple, warn the Churches that their hardest task after the war would be the recovery of their ideals. The war has been over nearly two years and the Free Churches are still fatigued and spiritless. They were scorched by the war and they have been tricked by the peace. They are in danger of giving way to the temptation which, as Dr. Glover says, threatens us all to-day—the temptation of thinking that things are so hopelessly wrong that it is not a bit of good trying to put them right. The young and ardent spirits in Nonconformity, who believe in the application of Christian principles to public affairs, are profoundly disturbed by the apathy and timidity of their leaders, their newspapers, and their official assemblies. They are depressed by the lack of brave, efficient, and enlightened leadership.

Dr. Meyer says that while the Free Churches went bathing the Labor Party stole their clothes. It would be more true to say that Nonconformity discarded its garments and is now bewailing its spiritual nakedness. It has lost its grip on the world, its influence on society, its power in politics. Its congre-

gations are smaller, its Sunday Schools are dwindling, its young people are drifting away. The attitude of alert and open-eyed young men—especially demobilized soldiers—may be summed up thus: "Is the Church against war? If not, we will join something that is. Is the Church out for social justice? If not, we will join the Labor Party." Nonconformity might die fighting for high principles and unpopular causes. But it cannot afford to be despised. It was furious over the suggestion of premium bonds; it said very little about the massacre in India. It was very angry over the Enabling Bill, it tolerated a Peace Treaty founded on revenge and loot. It is unsparing in its condemnation of Mr. Fisher's education proposals, but it is doing little or nothing for the League of Nations on which depends the future peace of the world.

The League of Nations will surely perish unless the moral forces of the country are summoned to its support. The Prime Minister patronizes it with kind words and starves it into premature decay. In the House of Commons arrogant, hard-faced men, flushed with wine, laugh at it. They are much more interested in capturing markets and cornering the world's oil. When a Member of Parliament moved the adjournment of the House in order to call attention to the encouragement given by the Government to aggressive militarism in Eastern Europe and its refusal to submit disputes to the League of Nations there was not even a quorum to support him and he was jeered at for his failure. The "Saturday Review" makes merry over Lord Robert Cecil. "Men," it says, "are still at hard knocks with one another; what have they to do with a strange, monk-like figure talking passionately about Christianity?" What, indeed? Why not forget the anguish of the world? Politics are so tainted to-day that faith and vision and integrity are subjects either for mirth or pompous futilities. Mr. Harold Begbie, who is, or used to be, a great admirer of Mr. Lloyd George, admits that our political life is now destitute of moral enthusiasm. There is, he says, no flame of righteousness—only astuteness, adroitness, trickery. He declares that it is painful to go to Downing Street nowadays. "Those little houses seem to become more and more like the office of a company promoter, less and less like the local habitation of a noble spirit set to inspire his nation and to help the whole world of humanity." Great Empires are staggering in impotence and bewilderment—their kings fallen, their Governments tottering, their commerce destroyed, plague and famine everywhere doing their work. We face a world of misery, hatred, and insolvency. And a League of Nations appears to be the only way of escape from the perils that threaten civilization. But it must be a real League of the Peoples—not a syndicate of the conquerors. What are the Free Churches going to do about it? Ask any young minister who attended the Baptist Union meetings at Birmingham what impressed him most and he will tell you Lord Hugh Cecil's wonderful speech on the League of Nations. But will the Baptist denomination rise superior to official timidity and put up a daring and well-organized fight for universal disarmament? For it is always officialdom that blocks the way. It is significant that when a resolution supporting the League of Nations was proposed at the meetings of the Congregational Union it had to be strengthened at the suggestion of a visitor and an outsider—Major David Davies.

Have the Free Churches nothing to say about the Polish war for Russian territory? Here is a war for which the Government first disclaims all responsibility and then admits that it has supported it by a liberal present of munitions. They protest that they have given no assistance to the Poles, either moral or material—no, they have only given them ammunition, without which they could not have started their monstrous adventure. It is a story of prevarication, concealment, and cunning. Do Free Churchmen realize that they have been taxed to subsidize this expedition?

Something is surely due to the gallant youths who,

with undefiled ideals, thought they were sacrificing their lives to end war for ever. Yet Sir Henry Wilson, the Government's chief military adviser, laughs at the very idea of a war to end war, and is already thinking of the next struggle and advising young men to keep "fit and ready" for it. It is the old stupid Prussianism, which we thought we had crushed, the old damnable heresy that you cannot settle anything unless you fight about it, and must, therefore, always be preparing for a fight. These men—Wilson, Foch, and the rest of them—believe that peace is impossible—and they are right; it is impossible while they are in power, for they are able to make it impossible. Mr. Garvin describes Sir Henry Wilson's speech as "real militarism, priding itself like chanticleer, and crowing on its toes. Modern democracy means to wring the neck of that bird." Let us hope Mr. Garvin is right, for the next war will not be like the last. It will not drag on for four years—the chemists will see to that. Penetrating poisons and murderous explosives rained from the air will make short work of us all, and civilization will be quickly and efficiently destroyed. War will be declared in the afternoon and civilian populations may be wiped out the same night. The Free Churches had better get to work.

Free Churchmen used to be passionate lovers of freedom. They believed in self-determination long before the phrase was invented. And yet they are apparently unmoved by the bitter tragedy of a misgoverned Ireland. Are they content to see that country ruled by military force—held down by the power of the sword? So far, I notice no uprising of protest. As I look out of the window I see a newspaper placard bearing the words: "Troops Pouring into Ireland." What do Free Churchmen think of it? Do they suppose that a policy of force and repression is ever going to achieve anything but hatred and revenge?

If Nonconformists do not wake up and fight the new Prussianism that is creeping into this country, we shall soon be helpless in its grip. This is supremely a Christian mission and it will be a cowardly blunder to leave it to the Labor Party, although we should by all means co-operate with Labor. We must not only end the miserable reign of force and fraud—we must also work and pray to hasten the triumph of brotherhood and reconciliation. I cannot help wishing that some Free Church leaders had gone down to Folkestone the other day to welcome the five hundred children from Vienna—innocent victims of the villainy of politicians. It would have been a gesture of goodwill—something to heal the wounds of the world. But we never think of these things—therefore we need in our Free Church organizations free, untired minds. We have had enough of officialism, with its chilling conservatism and caution. We need a Christian audacity that will face facts and tell the truth about them, and never rest until this unhappy world is set free from militarism.—Yours, &c.,  
F. A. A.

#### VIENNA RELIEF FUND.

	£	s.	d.
Amount already acknowledged in THE NATION	1,131	2	1
M. Merre, Esq. (Spalding) ... ..	5	5	0
Anonymous ... ..	1	1	0
J. B. ... ..		19	0
A. J. M. ... ..		10	0

We are compelled to hold over several letters till next week.  
—ED., NATION.

### Poetry.

#### FOREFATHERS.

HERE they went with smock and crook,  
Toiled in the sun, lolled in the shade,  
Here they mudded out the brook  
And here their hatchet cleared the glade:  
Harvest-supper woke their wit,  
Huntsman's moon their wooings lit.

From this church they led their brides,  
From this church themselves were led  
Shoulder-high; on these waysides  
Sat to take their beer and bread.  
Names are gone—what men they were  
These their cottages declare.

Names are vanished, save the few  
In the old brown Bible scrawled;  
These were men of pith and thew,  
Whom the city never called;  
Scarce could read or hold a quill,  
Built the barn, the forge, the mill.

On the green they watched their sons  
Playing till too dark to see,  
As their fathers watched them once,  
As my father once watched me;  
While the bat and beetle flew  
On the warm air webbed with dew.

Unrecorded, unrenowned,  
Men from whom my ways begin,  
Here I know you by your ground  
But I know you not within—  
All is mist, and there survives  
Not one moment of your lives.

Like the bee that now is blown  
Honey-heavy on my hand,  
From the toppling tansy-throne  
In the green tempestuous land,—  
I'm a-Maying now, nor know  
Who made honey long ago.

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

#### DISSONANCE.

OPEN a window on the world  
With all its griefs, and then  
When he has heard that sound a space  
Close it fast again.

Sweet will it be, lapped round with ease  
And music-troubled air,  
To hear for a moment on the wind  
A sound of far despair:

And then, to turn to lights again,  
And fingers soft on strings,  
While Sheba slips her bracelets off  
And spreads her arms and sings.

Sweet will it be, to hear far off  
That gusty sound of pain,  
And to remember, far away,  
A world of death and rain;

And then to close the window fast,  
And laugh, and slap soft hands,  
While girls from Tal and Mozambique  
Parade in sarabands. . . .

Close now the window. Close it well.  
That slow lament of pain  
Was but the dissonance that makes  
Dull music sweet again.

CONRAD AIKEN.

#### THE BUSY HEART.

So full her heart had been . . . .  
Of color and sweet sights,  
Of the earth's brown and green,  
And the stars' wavering lights;  
The broad river's croon  
And the sad rain's song,  
The young birds' trill and tune . . . .  
All in her heart would throng.

So busy with all joy  
That she scarce knew peace,  
Her heart was a questing boy  
That ran for delight's increase;  
Till running, overbold,  
She stole a secret bliss,  
And, wrapped in Earth's mantle-fold,  
She felt Peace kiss.

ANGELA CAVE.

## The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "From the Log of the Velsa." By Arnold Bennett. With a Frontispiece by the Author and Illustrations by E. A. Rickards. (Chatto & Windus. 18s.)
- "The Group Mind." By William McDougall. (Cambridge University Press. 21s.)
- "An Essay on Mediæval Economic Teaching." By Dr. George O'Brien. (Longmans. 12s. 6d.)
- "The *Œdipus Tyrannus* of Sophocles." Translated and explained by J. T. Sheppard. (Cambridge University Press. 20s.)

\* \* \*

THERE has been a lot of talk lately about progress, and as it is a matter which concerns us—our literary selves and our real selves—pretty intimately, it will be worth while to glance at the relations between literary and human progress, and to examine the one in the light of the other. Personally, I yield to none in my almost abject respect for Dean Inge, but there is no bilking the fact that he is a bad natural historian. His courageous and deeply reflective books tend to identify the stability of species with their unchangeableness, and, of course, by that view no progress is possible. But you cannot deny the accomplished fact; if there were no progress we should all—beasts, plants and men—be one-celled, nucleated amœbæ. Nor is it any argument to depreciate progress because its actuality is but newly discovered. The law of the parallelogram of forces is not invalid because eighteenth-century research was unaware of it. Thus, misled by his initial error, the Dean in his latest address proceeds to ridicule Herbert Spencer's "evolution of the simple into the complex by successive differentiations."

\* \* \*

BUT Spencer was merely formulating an irrefragable law, the law which made many-celled out of one-celled creatures, human beings and anthropoids out of lemurs, birds out of reptiles. The Dean takes "the whole tribe of parasites" as examples of a refutation of this law, forgetting that parasites are about the most complicated of non-human living creatures going. They progress to an excess of specialization. He says again that the "living dreadnoughts of the Saurian Age" have left us nothing but their bones. That is quite untrue, for their stem, if not themselves, has left us the birds and the mammals. It is equivalent to saying that the Piltdown man and Neanderthal man and Pithecanthropus have left us nothing but their bones. True, because they were separate species of man which have died out. But the main stem from which they branched progressed until it reached modern man—whether downwards or upwards is not the immediate point. Progress is of absolute necessity to life, and whatever hells we endure we are spared by the very nature of existence from the hell of standing still. *παρα πᾶσι*—even from Palæolithic to modern man, whose brain, if no bigger than that of his ancestor (why should it be, if it is adequate to the demands made upon it by its environment?), is certainly more intricately convoluted. The brain which can write an ode (a good one, I mean) or deliver an address in St. Paul's, is contained in no bigger a cranium than the brain which could conceive nothing further than the most convenient way of skinning a dead animal with a flint scraper, simply because the cranium is sufficiently capacious to accomplish both.

\* \* \*

PROGRESS, indeed, is not a theory but a fact, just as the errors of the Dean are errors of fact, not theory. Not that the Dean is not right in one way as his opponents are right in another. We are progressing ethically, but to immediate vision, it is downwards and with accelerated speed. Yet, if we open the windows of our stuffy, provincial ways of thinking, we are compelled to accept not only progress, but progress upwards. But to accept it is by no means the view of optimism. I would go further than Dean Inge and say that it is most unlikely that we, the races of Europe, can possibly survive as a civilization for many years

more. But that is an affirmation of progress. We cannot survive because we are not fit to survive, because we cannot respond to the higher demands made upon us in proportion to our development as men. That is not the fault of the demand, but the response or rather lack of response to it, since if we were not capable of responding to it it would not be made upon us, as it was not made upon our remote ancestors. A proportionate demand was made upon them and they responded to it or they would not have been our ancestors. Ours is the possibility of response, ours the power of choice, and if we are too specialized in one direction to see any other, then we shall die as the Ammonites died, of over-specialization in the primeval ooze. The demand will be made elsewhere, for the world must go on, on into roomier and purer regions of consciousness. There is no more disagreeable experience in life than this sense of being left behind, but the universe cannot be held up to please and coddle us, and nobody is to blame except our own arrogance and greed.

\* \* \*

THIS seems to have little to do with literature. It has a great deal. The condition of literature in an age is a delicate thermometer of that age's health, and it takes the temperature not only of its age's welfare but of its past and future. Now our early twentieth century bears certain superficial resemblances to the early nineteenth, but the barest glance at the literatures of the two centuries betrays a radical difference. These differences are numerous, but the principal one is that the literature of a hundred years ago sought to expand the horizon of life, while that of the present seeks to contract it, in spite—and this is the remarkable thing—in spite of the enormous actual expansion of it made by science in the middle of last century. We see that our literature is more or less divided into two contending schools, the one academic in its aims, the other experimental with new forms and techniques. But we are less ready to see that these rival schools are united in preserving themselves from the contagion of the world's slow stain, as neither Adonais nor still less the more inspired minstrel of his passing ever thought of doing. An article on Stopford Brooke's last work by Mr. E. M. Forster appeared the other day which puts this modern view with quite brutal frankness. The article is singularly unjust to the memory of Stopford Brooke, who, whatever his limitations, was something better than a curate presiding at a literary school tea-party. But, putting that aside, the point about the article is its contemptuous, formal, cold, prim insistence upon the things with which literature has nothing to do and particularly with what the writer calls the "moral hankering," the spiritual rat which gnawed at Stopford Brooke and the poets he wrote about. Reading this and other critical articles of the same kind, and the literature of which they are the reflection, one asks in mild impatience what literature has to do with? We come back inevitably, in fact, to over-specialization, the same kind of specialization which complicates the parasitic organism, but deprives it of all the healthy functions of normal life—movement, energy, reproduction, experience, adventure, choice, will, and love.

\* \* \*

OR we can put it in another way and describe this loss of contact, this elaboration inwards, as a branching off from the main stem of life, just as Neanderthal man was a branching off. The penalty is the same both with a physical being and an idea—they must and do perish, because they cannot progress. They are the lost twigs of the tree of life, and pretty and inviting though they may be, there is no consequence to or reality in them. They are left behind in growth, and it is right that they should be so left. For the philosophies of life are subject to evolution no less than planets and physical organisms, literature no less than races or governments. If literature will take no account of the mental, moral, and spiritual discoveries in which our age, in spite of its agonies, is rich, so much the worse for it. It will be discarded as unfit for survival. But Stopford Brooke, for all his faults and in his clumsy, didactic, Victorian way, is less "out of date" than Mr. E. M. Forster, since in his interpretation of the meaning of poetry, all receptive and all embracing, he kept his thought well in the centre of the main stream of progress.

II. J. M.



## Reviews.

## TAR AND WHITEWASH.

"Correspondence of Jean-Baptiste Carrier during his Mission to Brittany, 1793-94." Collected, Translated, and Annotated by E. H. CARRIER, M.A. (Lane. 15s. net.)

TAR and whitewash have always been the chief pigments of the picturesque historian. First comes the tar—laid on with a will by a Carlyle, a Macaulay, a Michelet, a Taine or a Froude; then the victim is left free to go "fester through Florence," London, or Paris; a hung-dog with a bad name, usually with a pile of bad names; abject, wretched, offensive to the mind's eye, ear and nose of the sensitive reader in his easy chair.

But the picturesque historian is apt to overdo it—a reaction may set in, or the documents disclose a new point of view—and so, even after judgment, an inquiry into the true facts may be directed, and then the whitewasher with his pail appears on the scene, and sets to work, with an amazing energy and a zeal that too frequently outruns discretion, to cover the tar.

This "whitewashing" is not often a successful process. History, that record of crimes and follies, demands a regular supply of victims. The reader loves to see villainy personified, and cruelty clanking in rhetorical chains. Doubtful issues, suspended judgments, wear the air of paradoxes and puzzles. One of the most readable books in the Library is the late Mr. Paget's "Paradoxes and Puzzles: Historical, Judicial, and Literary," which sought to upset a good many well-established verdicts, but though published nearly half a century ago it has never reached a second edition. We like our convictions to remain settled.

The book at the top of the page is a mildly-mannered, well "documented" attempt to make the student, for the author makes no appeal to the general mob of readers, to alter any unfavorable judgment he may have formed or inherited about Jean-Baptiste Carrier, that evil-sounding name, associated with the Noyades of Nantes, which though they were but an incident in a series of horrors, have attained a position all their own in the shuddering imaginations of men.

The verdict here sought to be upset cannot be better given than in the words of that excellent compilation in the making of which were numbered many good intellects, "The Imperial Dictionary of Universal Biography":—

"Carrier, Jean-Baptiste, one of the most infamous names in the history of the Revolution. This bloody demagogue was born in 1756. Entering the Convention in 1792, he helped to set up the revolutionary tribunal, and voted for the death of the King. At Nantes, whither he was sent from Normandy, he perpetrated in the name of the Convention, but really without its knowledge, the most shocking atrocities. The detail of his crimes is at the present day read almost with incredulity. The world was rid of a monster who on a throne would have been a worse Nero, when Carrier was brought to the block in December, 1794."

Those of us who were alive and could read what we liked in 1866, the date of the first publication of Swinburne's "Poems and Ballads," will perhaps recall a very Swinburnian poem called "Les Noyades," which described the ecstasy of a young man "rough with labor and red with fight," who found it was to be his fate, "Bosom to bosom to drown and die," bound to "a lady, noble by name and face," for whom he had long entertained a hopeless passion:

"Carrier came down to the Loire and slew  
Till all the ways and the waves waxed red;  
Bound and drowned, slaying two by two  
Maidens and young men, naked and wed."

This is the crime for which the whitewash is most required. The editor is to be much commended for his frankness and patient industry, for no one who can bring himself to read this "Correspondence" can doubt that he has before him the materials for a verdict of his own finding.

In the year two of the French Republic, "one and indivisible," the situation from the *sans-culotte* point of view, in the Department of Morbihan and the City of Nantes, was serious, if not desperate; and Carrier, to whom the National Convention had entrusted the task of "restoring

law and order," had no doubt of what methods should be employed. Here may well follow a few elegant extracts:—

"Continue, Citizen, to carry terror and death to all the counter-revolutionists of Morbihan and the surrounding communes. Let every individual suspected of incivism, or of having dabbled in counter-revolutionary plots be instantly incarcerated in safe prisons. Let every individual whom we may find armed against the Republic, or taking part in counter-revolutionary assemblages, be instantly put to death and their property consigned to the flames."—(P. 136, date 30th November, 1793.)

"Nantes.

"For three weeks public spirit at Nantes has been at revolutionary height. The tricolor floats from every window, civic inscriptions are found everywhere. Priests have found their grave in the Loire. Fifty-three others are to undergo the same fate. Counter-revolutionists have hatched a horrible plot. Six of the most guilty were guillotined on the spot."—(P. 139, 6th December, 1793.)

"The accident that happened to the priests who perished in the Loire rejoices the heart of every citizen. My colleagues at Angers have just sent me fifty-three more of them."

"10th December, 1793.

"Fifty-eight individuals, termed refractory priests, have been sent to Nantes from Angers—they were at once placed in a ship on the Loire last night, and were one and all swallowed up by the river. What a revolutionary torrent is the Loire.—Greetings and fraternity."—(P. 150.)

"I emphatically recommend to the National Vengeance those counter-revolutionary scoundrels, Beyseer, Baco, Beaufranchet, and Letoumeux—the heads of these four scoundrels can never heal the deep wounds they have dealt their country. It is desirable, it is even essential, that the criminal court should condemn them to death speedily, and appoint the execution in Nantes—it would be ineffective in Paris, and would be of the greatest benefit here. Send them all back while I am here and I will be responsible for making their heads fall."—(P. 151, 11th December, 1793.)

"Carrier is surprised that the Vendéans should ask for provisions: by order of the Convention no provisions of any kind are to be left there—buildings are to be burnt and lands ravaged. They have caused the death of thousands of patriots—let them starve and die. The Vendée is not to have a single grain left in the country."—(13th December, 1793, P. 158.)

"Nantes, 19th December, 1793.

"Prisoners are being led to Nantes in hundreds—the guillotine cannot suffice. They are being shot. Long, long life to the Republic! Comrade, how well things are going."—(P. 164.)

"Nantes, 21st December, 1793.

"You are ordered to burn all the houses of the rebels, to put their owners to death, and remove all their subsistences.—The People's Representative, Carrier."—(P. 169.)

"Nantes, 24th December, 1793.

"All the brigands on the right bank of the Loire are at last exterminated. We attacked them on the 2nd and 3rd, and made such a slaughter of them that we have not heard a word about them since. There were few who escaped, and these we shall destroy by beating the woods."—(P. 178.)

"As for the interior of Brittany, I think a deputy, triple-skinned, ought to make a revolutionary round there with twelve or fifteen hundred of the cavalry. He should begin by revolutionizing the larger communes, called towns aforetime, and from there scouring the country districts, should by well-planned accidents burn the churches, give effective chase to all refractory priests who are still there, and lead forth all the *Constitutionnelles*, who do nearly as much harm, purging them of all *ci-devant* nobles and robinocrats (i.e., refractory gentlemen of the long robe) who spread the poison of aristocracy and fanaticism, and foment the spirit of rebellion. The peasants thus isolated, without churches, tocsin, priests, or squires, would only think of ploughing their fields and paying their taxes. The deputy charged with this mission might turn out the Pétions, Buzots, and others. I believe them to be in a corner of Brittany, not far from Quimper." (P. 191.)

It is plain from these extracts that neither the Duke of Alva, nor Claverhouse, not to say Cromwell, nor others nearer our own times, could teach Carrier any of the methods of repression. Carrier was not always thus heroically occupied. He occasionally unbent:—

"Jean-Marie Collet, Minister of the Catholic cultus, has married a young citizeness of Rennes. The ceremony, a touching one, which assures the conquest of philosophy over prejudice, has taken place. I accompanied the bride during the whole fête—an immense crowd of people of all ages and both sexes surrounded and followed us, awaking the echoes with their cries of joy, 'Vive la République! Vive la Convention! Vivent les bons pères qui se marient!' A civic banquet, a gay dance,

both *sans culotte* and well attended, concluded the delightful scene." (P. 63.)

Nor did Carrier hesitate to ascend the pulpit and preach a sermon at Nantes:—

"Arrived at the Lower Church Sainte Croix, Citizen Carrier mounts the pulpit so often profaned by the impure and false words of sacerdotalism and the priests. 'Citizen Montagnards,' he exclaims, in accents of that noble passion for virtue with which he is animated, 'this day will serve further to disperse the rank mists of the despotism of Kings and priests,' and so on. When Carrier sat down, a Bishop took his place and concluded a sermon by abjuring his priestly title, in which course he was followed by several *curés* of the districts around Nantes." (From a letter of a Townsman about 17th November, 1790. P. 115.)

This correspondence makes a very interesting book, and the editor of it is able to add, after preparing it for the press:—

"It is safe to say that the Carrier of this correspondence, the young Deputy, enthusiastic for liberty and fraternity, the laborious Proconsul whose almost every moment was filled with the many details of an onerous office, whose recorded counsels to army officers and political clerks are moderate, sober, and wise, touched with fine humor and never failing in their genial camaraderie, who continually but cheerfully battled against ill-health and over-work, was not the 'mad dog' of Taine's eloquently-worded libel, nor the 'horrible monster' of Mignet, Carlyle, and Thiers."

The reader of this "Correspondence" may be left to judge for himself.

Carrier, like most of the Apostles, came to a violent end. The forces of the Terror were spent. The majority in the Convention could no longer govern. At first there was no result, but, says Lord Acton, the process of change was set in motion by certain citizens of Nantes:—

"Carrier had sent a batch of 132 of his prisoners to feed the Paris guillotine. Thirty-eight of them died of the hardships they endured. The remainder were still in prison, and they petitioned to be put on their trial. The trial took place and the evidence given made a reaction inevitable. On September 14th, 1794, the Nantais were acquitted. Then the necessary consequence followed. If the victims of Carrier were innocent, what was Carrier himself?" (Acton's *Lectures on the French Revolution*, p. 333.)

Carrier, by a vote of 498 to 2, was summoned before the Tribunal, and after a long State trial was condemned to perish at the *razor*, as he was used to call the guillotine. He defended himself with spirit, and his best point was that the prosecutors were as bad as himself. On the 16th of December, 1794, he died, amidst the hoots and yells and execrations of the very people in whose cause and for whose sake he had wallowed in blood. I do not think this particular bit of whitewashing has succeeded, but we are grateful for the book.

A. B.

### THE GOLDEN ANSWER.

"Enslaved, and Other Poems." By JOHN MASEFIELD. (Heinemann. 6s. net.)

WHATEVER fate may eventually befall some of Mr. Masefield's volumes of poetry, it is at once singular and exasperating to find him, in print or in conversation, waved aside with hypercritical contempt, as though he were the merest aspirant "snatching a fearful joy" from a sheaf of occasional poems, or were not himself acquainted with his artistic ideal, method, and capability. Eulogy itself may have contributed by want of proportion to this tendency; but, apart from the origins, the frame of mind is apparently congenial to the fermenting depression of the moment. It is a literary chlorosis.

Mr. Masefield's poetic career is in point of fact one of the greatest sincerity and hopefulness. He has never retreated from the combat with his own emotion into facile and simpering chamber-music; like the little black devils in Blake, he has fought for himself. Extreme finish has never been granted him, and where in his lyrics he has been nearest to achieving it, he has had to subdue some of that personality which is much more valuable. Even in the longer poems there are mannerisms innumerable, feeble violences, jog-trot passages, and slurred psychologies; and

he has sometimes laid himself open to Hunt's criticism of Southey's heroic attempts: "There was a poetical nature distributed through the mass, idly despising the concentration that would have been the salvation of it." What has, however, brought him triumphantly through the John Barleycorn ordeals of poetic evolution is his creed—unpopular as it may be—"Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun." Those whose emotions occur only by gaslight will find no sympathetic worldweariness in him; to those about to cut their throats, on the ground that life is not worth living, we gladly recommend even "The Widow in the Bye Street," with its closing immortal reassertion of beauty.

And at last the period appears to have arrived with Mr. Masefield—as it does with all true poets, although the age-limit varies—when genius and judgment are fairly matched to produce crowning achievement. In the present volume there is a certainty, a just balance which indicates this. It is not a sensational book, in the way of "The Everlasting Mercy"; there is no longer the unconcealed and sometimes lost endeavor of previous volumes, nor the sport with slang and bloodiness. The appeal is more profound, and in all probability more permanent; the metrical and metaphorical iterations which impeded the rapid onrush of the earlier stories do not arise here to disturb the direct, sustained, yet deeply emotional narration of the title-poem "Enslaved." The plot is characteristic, for blood is spilt, and slaves are tortured; the lover who discovers that pirates from Saffee have carried off his "April of a woman" becomes their slave so that he may rescue her; treacherous Duhamel and gallant Gerard interest themselves in his plans; and at last after a series of critical moments the escape is made. And then, in the flush of success, comes disaster; and the adventurers are taken before the Khalif. Death seems inevitable; but by a fine impulse Gerard speaks scornfully of death to the scornful Moor. Touched with an impulse as fine, he gives them their liberty; and the long-menacing cloud is gone, the sky left brighter than ever. Not once in the development of this history does Mr. Masefield descend to extravaganzas: the poem is a masterpiece of economy in sentiment, in words, and in color. It has the honesty of personal experience, identical or cognate.

So closely-knit is the poem that quotation scarcely does it justice. When, however, such a Chaucerian couplet as

"Forceful he was, with promise in his eye  
Of rough capacity and liberty,"

so rich and restrained a line as

"The moon arose and walked upon the water,"  
or such metrical perfection as

"Their long-drawn songs were timed with clapping hands—"

when these and others occur so naturally in their surroundings as they do here, the quality and tone of the whole are seen to be rich and enduring. The faculty of passionate imagination burns clear in the picture of the lover's escape from the seraglio:—

"It was morning now, with daylight breaking,  
The leaves all shivering and birds awaking.  
We climbed the ladder.

• • •

"Its eleven rungs  
Called to the Moors of us with all their tongues:  
'Wake!' 'Wake!' 'They fly!' The three of them are  
flying!  
'Oh, broken house!' 'Oh, sleepers, thieves are trying  
To take the Khalif's treasure!' 'Guards!' 'Awake!'  
'They rob the women!' 'For the prophet's sake,'  
'Slaughter these Christians!' Thus the ladder spoke  
Three times aloud, yet nobody awoke.  
Even the hag upon the roof was still."

The rhythmic beauty of "Enslaved" is in keeping with its spiritual beauty. The rapine and sudden despair give place to hard resolution, that to sudden emotion, and that again to crowded and stirring action, as much in the form and sound as in the sense of the verse. Indeed, it would be difficult to better Mr. Masefield's heroic couplet, though possibly he is overfond of the dissyllabic rhyme with its weakening tendency.

The long ballad "The Hounds of Hell," which follows "Enslaved" in the book, is of a similar dignity and patience. It is genuine Masefield, and yet is reminiscent of the

# STARVATION.

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**S**TARVATION is the awful Monument fast being sculptured by the hand of Death in thousands of Towns and Villages of Europe where Millions of Children are starving and dying. They are in daily, hourly, peril. It is not a threatened calamity, but a frightful and active tragedy that is being enacted NOW—minute by minute, even as you read NOW.

Thousands have died in the past few weeks and thousands more are now on the point of death. Each new death is another hammer blow upon the Sculptor's chisel fashioning this infamous Memorial to the callousness of a civilisation that allows such things to be.

Shall we in Great Britain permit our cold aloofness to become a byword and a tradition amongst our neighbours? Shall we let these wretched little ones suffer the pangs of a slow and agonising death because we are apathetic to help?

### HOW YOU CAN EASILY SAVE ONE OR MORE FROM A HORRIBLE DOOM.

History has shown that Britons are made of better stuff. The credit, the honour, the dignity of our great Nation are at stake to-day, and this very moment in which you are reading is the period of TEST. If you send even a few shillings NOW, while there is yet time, you will have saved at least one innocent young life from a horrible doom. But if you feel sorry—and shrug your shoulders—and leave it to others, so surely will another innocent young life be needlessly sacrificed.

Just think of it! All the time, outside our very doors, a multitude of helpless children and stricken Mothers are perishing for want of food and clothes, not One Thousand, Two Thousand, or a Hundred Thousand, but MILLIONS! It is not in China or Tibet. It is in Europe—a mere tourist's trip from where you are reading now.

### A TERRIBLE FACT.

Cruel cold and famine are stalking amongst those helpless mites, without clothing, without fire, without shelter, and spreading their miserable agony far and wide. It is a terrible fact that in some districts there is not a child alive under the age of 7 years.

A recent report states: "Many of the poor refugees have even been stripped of their clothes, and left naked to die. Thousands of adults and children have not tasted any normal food for weeks, but have existed on roots and leaves and dandelions. The olive-green colour of their skin and deep-sunken eyes testify to their ghastly sufferings. These poor people—mad with hunger—have in some cases eaten the flesh from the bodies of their dead comrades."

"In some towns in Central Europe there is no Milk, no Fats, no Meats. BABIES WHO ARE NOT FED BY THEIR WEAK, HALF-STARVED MOTHERS HAVE NO FOOD BUT FROST-BITTEN POTATOES. In most cases they die. But far greater the tragedy of those that live on in this appalling misery."

### HOW YOU CAN HELP.

Many of us can spare a few shillings, others a few pounds, others a hundred or a thousand pounds—without stint or sacrifice. Your opportunity is now. All the channels of relief are organised—part by America under the guiding hand of Mr. Hoover, and part by Britain's "Save the Children" Fund, under the Chairmanship of Lord Weardale which has this year contributed over £250,000 to help the little ones in all famine areas, irrespective of Race, Politics, or Religion.

Many contributions have already been received to the most urgent appeal made to the generosity of the Nation, and Lord Weardale—the Chairman of the SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND—wishes again to tender his warmest and sincerest thanks to those who have already listened to the call of the suffering little ones and have now so generously saved the lives of others.

### WHY HESITATE LONGER—WHILE YOU HESITATE

### THE CHILDREN DIE.

But for each one who has given THERE MUST BE FOUR OR FIVE WHO HESITATE—whose hearts have been stirred by the appeal, but who have not allowed their better feelings to have their way. It is to these, and to ALL WHO READ NOW, that the averting of a colossal monument of Starvation is entrusted.

Think of the Millions of little ones who are in immediate peril. Think of the blood-ties, of the terrible sacrifices we have made in the war that civilisation might be spared, and think that now—in spite of all—the awful aftermath of war is threatening the destiny of mankind in this appalling fashion.

Plague and disease, stunted babies, shrivelled breasts, incapable of nourishment; a sterile earth, devoid of crops; hundreds of square miles of country, without Milk, without Bread, without Medicine, and without clothing of any kind—and above all, the gaunt and towering Figure of Starvation snatching babies from their mothers' arms and claiming victims every hour.

This is the tragedy, and to-day is our great opportunity to stay its course. If we let to-morrow dawn before we have done our utmost to help, who knows how many more infant lives will pay forfeit.



Shall we, by our indifference, create a justification for the erection of

### A MONUMENT OF STARVATION

in every City, Town, or Village of Great Britain to immortalise our neglect of these little ones?

### SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND

#### Objects:

To help the Children  
Throughout the Famine Areas

PATRONS: His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury; His Eminence Cardinal Bourne, Archbishop of Westminster; the Rev. A. T. Futtery; the Rt. Hon. Earl Curzon, K.G.; the Rt. Hon. Lord Robert Cecil, M.P.

To LORD WEARDALE,  
Chairman of Committee of  
"Save the Children" Fund"  
(Room 243,  
26, Golden Square, Regent St.,  
London, W. 1.

Sir,—I would like to help the Starving Children in the Famine Areas of Europe and Asia Minor and enclose ..... as a donation to the "Save the Children" Fund.

Name .....

Address .....

The Nation, 12/6/20.....

N.B.—Offers of assistance and co-operation are invited from Public Men and Leaders of Society—anyone, in fact, who has in the past assisted to raise Funds in the form of Local Subscription Lists, Charity Social Events, Gymkhanas, Al Fresco Concerts, &c. Every true Britisher—man, woman, or child—must recognise the need of doing something and at once.—BENCH.



enthusiasm for righteousness of the "Ancient Mariner"; there is the same darkness, terror, mystery, and then—portrayed with the most subtle directness—the same ecstasy of escape, and daylight, and the world's beauty. Perhaps no summer landscape was ever imagined in so English and so joyful a spirit as this:—

"He waded to a glittering land,  
With brighter light than ours;  
The water ran on silver sand  
By yellow water-flowers.

"The fishes nosed the stream to rings  
As petals floated by,  
The apples were like orbs of kings  
Against a glow of sky.

"On cool and steady stalks of green  
The outland flowers grew.  
The ghost-flower, silver like a queen,  
The queen-flower streakt with blue.

"The king-flower, crimson on his stalk,  
With fretting in his crown:  
The peace-flower, purple, from the chalk  
The flower that loves the down. . . ."

The personifying faculty which can create so convincing a wonderland is rare enough in poetry at all times; it is the consummation. To see external nature with accuracy is something—there was something to be said for the man who only saw the primrose as a yellow primrose; to comprehend the goings-on, the necessities, the situations which occur there is something much more; but to spiritualize and to add that light "which never was on land or sea" must stand as the highest achievement in this kind. It is impossible to express our delight at this vein of Mr. Masefield's except by a comparison: and we shall hoard the passage, of which a part has been quoted, in that not overcrowded corner of the memory where the Ancient Mariner still watches the watersnakes, and Christabel kneels in the moonlight. Nor is the grimness of "The Hounds of Hell" anything but masterly. The very opening stanza has the instinct of mystery:—

"About the crowing of the cock,  
When the shepherds feel the cold,  
A horse's hoofs went clip-a-clock  
Along the hangman's wold."

Of the remaining poems in this volume, it is enough to say that there are several sonnets of great strength and beauty; and there is one lyric which hardly seems more than strung rhymes, pleasant enough but singularly devoid of the greater inspiration which fills Mr. Masefield's contemplative poems with glorious life. "Enslaved" (to consider the book as a whole) seems definitely to fulfil the simple, the sensuous, and the passionate functions of poetry. It is not, we repeat, a meteoric book; nor by any means of more immediate allurements than—for instance—"The Daffodil Fields"; but the time has gone by when Mr. Masefield's art was in the stage of fierce contrasts and amorphous expression. Not one of that remarkable series of "dungaree blues" has failed to stir us and astonish us; but it cannot be too strongly insisted that "Enslaved" marks the outcome, the harvest of such long-drawn and fascinating processes. Its tranquillity may be mistaken for lassitude, but by those only who find an uncanny glamor in bold imperfection. Its simple plots may not intrigue lovers of pathology. There is no sop to the fraternity of neomania. But if command of form and expression, if warm-blooded experience, and if nobility of spirit are sought for in poetry, then the prospect for Mr. Masefield's coming years is indeed encouraging. It is some years since in "Dauber" he wrote: "O, joy of trying for beauty, ever the same." Towards the close of "Enslaved" we read:—

"The golden answer to the deeply willed,  
The purely longed-for, hardly tried-for thing."

This answer is, we feel, now being vouchsafed to him.

E. B.

#### MAN HUNTING.

"Sniping in France." By Major H. HESKETH-PRICHARD, D.S.O., M.C. (Hutchinson. 12s. 6d.)

THE attraction war books have for many of us, and for a diversity of reasons, is perhaps a sign of morbidity. But though we go to each of them, as it appears, hoping for

better luck this time, it is extremely rare that the volume detains us beyond the first pages. Most of them might be by the same man. The first demand on the record of any experience is that it should be honest and original. The desire to be like everybody else, which during the fighting gave us the expression of valiant sheep who would sooner face the slaughter-house than the drover with the peremptory voice, gives even the books about the affair, now it is over, the shy embarrassment of lambs who wish to bleat, but wonder whether that dog is still about. It is not, of course, that the books are really insincere; they are merely afraid of their readers. Pale war books for pink people might serve for their advertisement.

There are exceptions. Certainly all the remarkable confessions of the famous generals, who are now crowding in to tell us artlessly that the simple truth is they never knew what they were doing, are most valuable as evidence; for their insistent lesson, important in a world dominantly militarist for some while longer, is, of course, that they are never likely to know even their own business. The cult of the "great soldier," though it has awed the numerous credulous for ages, it is certain now never had any more in it than the vogue, happily more brief and innocuous, of the crinoline. But we had to make way for it. When we stood, awed and respectful, before that strong, silent figure in its impressive trappings, we showed a pleasing human trait, but we were bluffed, and we were really fatuous; and it appears the strong, silent one had at least the sense to know that, and to take advantage of it.

But the important war books, the books we want but rarely get, are the records of observant and thoughtful men, who will recount to us their experiences as they happened—and as much of the apparently unimportant detail as they like. We want what they thought, too, at the time, undeflected by what they may suppose we expect of them. Major Hesketh-Prichard's is such a book. We do not know, from his book, what he thinks of war. What he has done is to examine for us carefully the task this war found for him, and to show how it affected him and those who were about him. What effect that has upon us is not his affair. He is concerned only with the work which devolves upon men like himself when, in the process of the competition for markets, the inevitable happens, and there comes the acute stage, for a time, when the argument is continued with rifles and high explosives. The job, then, is not one a gentleman really enjoys, who is unused even to the normal ethic and argument of the trading community, but being what he is, he turns to the help of his clan with the unquestioning selfless keenness and devotion to duty which looks so curious compared with the efforts of the merely ambitious who have no such rigid code of honor.

One can see this book supplying a number of strange tales of the front for quotation in the daily Press—it contains some of the best narratives of curious trench episodes that we have seen, though we do not suppose the author wishes for any compliments on that score. Again, it will provoke matter for discussion among those select sportsmen and soldiers who regarded trench warfare, seeing they had to wage it, with the acute and detached interest of men of science solving a new, vast, complex, and urgent problem. We believe it was just such men, whose names are mostly unknown to the public, backed by the solid and determined nucleus of stalwarts in each platoon of the army, who really wore the German Army down; "victory" had almost nothing to do with "generalship." Yet again, those who are predisposed to study the future training of young soldiers will find in this volume a fund of experience and suggestions which the professional happy experts at the War Office, their time necessarily occupied in considering whether soldiers should wear red tunics, whether airmen should carry swords, and the correct method of holding the thumbs to the seams of the trousers when standing at attention, problems whose urgency withhold from them the good luck of being shot at in warfare for prolonged periods, may dismiss as being irrelevant, as at first such experts dismissed the Tanks.

For us the book has a different value altogether, and we commend it to the close study of those with no experience of the mentality of the intelligent soldier in action, the man who, as one simple gentleman from another, has accepted from the diplomatist and politician the word that this killing is an



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essential task, and turns at once to a steadily willed effort to accomplish the new job with dispatch and economy. There was a time, for example, when on the British front our losses from German snipers, who were aided by telescopic sights, were so grave that they went a good way to demoralizing our men. Those Germans had to be killed. Men like Major Hesketh-Prichard accepted that logic, and turned to apply it. They studied it like a chess problem. This reviewer can speak with some personal knowledge of it, and remembers how the Major's methods succeeded in killing off so many of those Germans that the demoralization went to stay on the other side of No-Man's-Land. It may be confidently assumed that our expert shots, with their skillfully devised tactics (there were some of these shots who could claim they had killed a hundred of the enemy) enjoyed the work no more than would the Archbishop of Canterbury. Mrs. Humphry Ward, who visited the back areas of the battle line, when the work was explained to her at our Sniping School (established by Major Hesketh-Prichard) told him, horrified, that such ruthless killing of men was "one of the most dreadful sides of the war." It was. But it was the task we gave some acutely sensitive men to accomplish. It was not their affair; it was *ours*. Readers will find described in this book the strategy by which a famous German sniper of the early days, called Wilibald by our fellows, who had shot off twenty of our soldiers, was at last "done in." The story might be passed as fiction by a reader. But it is literally true; and this may be added to the author's account of it. The reviewer happens to know that the officer who by thought and artful strategy, which would have distinguished Sherlock Holmes, managed to put a bullet through Wilibald, really respected that Hun's audacious but elusive gallantry, and the memory of that sniper's convulsions (who had disguised his head and back in mangold tops) when he was shot, haunted the shooter long after, even when devising the deaths of other disastrous individual German shots. It is clear that not all the damage done was what the German sniper received. Those two enemies, respecting each other, but fated by their peoples to use their high intelligence to regard each other as ferocious and deadly beasts, might together turn on us, and put a mute, terrible, and unanswerable question. But they do not; and we? Oh, we are thinking of red tunics now, and a Pacific naval problem. That is what the war taught us.

A few readers of this genuine record of war will thank the author for a reason concerned but indirectly with its subject. Yet since the gentleman who was "adviser in wines and spirits to the War Office," and the "expert salesman in frozen rabbits and eggs," and the war correspondents, have been honored as valuable contributors to victory, all who remember Colonel A. G. Stuart, of the 40th Pathans, whose pertinacity, in the face of official indifference, aided Major Hesketh-Prichard to get his Sniping School established when nobody seemed to want it except the men in the line, will be grateful to the Major for reminding us of such a typical figure among the field officers of our Army. The public, of course, never heard of him. He was killed near Ypres in 1916. But for us who remember him, in these latter days when morals, to say nothing of manners, are of no official use to the community, it is consoling to remember that Colonel Stuart, too, was British. We know his modesty, his inexorable sense of duty, his gentleness of character, his apparent indifference as to what happened to himself, (though he was scheming the welfare of others day and night) were not unusual virtues in the British Army. They were, indeed, fairly common. But with all that there went in Colonel Stuart a simple trust in the mere word of other men that won for him a devoted service, and from the least likely, which mere discipline and fear could never evoke. And what he thought of war he never said. But one day, moved by what he saw in Vermelles, he turned to this reviewer and said, to the complete astonishment of his hearer: "This sort of thing must never happen again." Well, he is dead, and unknown, and a different sort of man is honored by a grateful country.

## SILVANUS THOMPSON.

"Silvanus Phillips Thompson, D.Sc., LL.D., F.R.S.: His Life and Letters." By J. S. THOMPSON and H. G. THOMPSON. (Fisher Unwin. 21s. net.)

THE late Professor Thompson was a man of culture. He was one of the very few men of culture of his own or of our generation for, since the Renaissance, the word has come to describe, quite indefensibly, those who have received an exclusively literary education. But by a man of culture we here mean a man who brings adequate knowledge and discriminating taste to bear upon the choicest works in philosophy, science and the arts. To the popular mind Thompson was known only as a scientist, and it is true that the accidents of circumstance made science his chief pre-occupation. It would probably be incorrect, however, to say that science was his chief interest. A man's actual achievement depends not only on his inclinations but also on his opportunities, and Thompson, once he had embraced the exacting career of a scientific lecturer, was condemned to be an amateur in any other pursuit. But although, as with all of us, his life was "narrowed to one mortal career," it is probable that he will find a place in at least three histories. He will occupy a respectable, though minor, position in the history of physics during the nineteenth century, he will find a place as a great teacher in any history of contemporary education, and no detailed history of the modern religious consciousness will omit the part played by Thompson in the modern development of mystical Christianity. These aspects of Thompson's multifarious activity are public property; to a smaller circle he was known as a talented painter in water-color, while his friends were aware that he was enthusiastically musical and that his reading included much of the best literature in six languages.

Thompson's career raises again the old question of the versatile man as contrasted with the specialist. Many of those who knew and admired Thompson are reluctant to admit, for instance, that his place as a scientist is not, after all, a high one. They see him coldly ranked with men they feel to be his inferiors, and they are eager with explanations—his administrative work at the Finsbury College, his large and international correspondence, and so on. But the fact is that Thompson's published work probably does full justice to his purely scientific ability. He was not a man with a special gift; his brain was rather of the type so eloquently described by Huxley, it could "forge the anchors" and "weave the gossamers" of the mind. Having the power to do both, Thompson chose to do both, and if some of his admirers find too few "anchors" of his making they may be referred, on the other hand, to an exceptional number of "gossamers." Thompson had a very good, clear, "all-round" mind, and he employed it in the service of a very wide curiosity. In a man of lesser ability this combination might have resulted in the production of a mass of disconnected trivialities, but Thompson's mind had altogether too much weight and incisiveness for him to incur this danger. He was not a *dilettante*, although he was not, properly speaking, a specialist. His real influence was the influence proper to a man of culture; he surveyed things from a centre; he reminded people of the existence of one another. The influence of such a man ceases with his life. It is in his own person that his various activities are unified, and on his death the specialists inevitably proceed to pick and choose amongst his remains. But in Thompson's case the fact that a large number of young men came under his influence may enable him to die a less abrupt death, for many of them imbibed not only something of his knowledge, but also something of his spirit. It is safe to say that most of Thompson's Finsbury students learnt from him a good deal that was not on the syllabus. To such students the present volume will prove particularly interesting. They will find many little touches which will bring back to them the teacher they knew, and now that they are able to survey his life as a whole they will find that their youthful, unsophisticated admiration was not misplaced. That is the tribute that Thompson would have most valued, and it is the tribute he has best earned.



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## MY SLEEPING PARTNER

By H. DENNI BRADLEY

OF course, we all know that war makes strange bedfellows. But what I now awaken to is that Peace has thrust upon me a sleeping partner for whom I possess a physical and mental aversion. My sleeping partner is an octopus from whose stifling embrace I can find no escape. One whose everlasting proximity is nauseating, whose rapacity is disgusting, whose clutch is corrupting, and whose insensate squandering of the results of my toil is ruinous. One who when awake keeps appalling company, revels in dissolute circles and extols wanton extravagance as a virtue. And when asleep, whose sleep is so deadly that I can awaken her to no reason, no logic, no intelligence, no vision no understanding. For years my partner has been surrounded by multitudes of sycophants and parasites. And always these myriads of unproductive drones are egging her on to fresh excesses.

What am I to do? There is but one thing left—to kill this blighting influence while she is in a drunken stupor.

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## THE TWO SIDES OF THE SHIELD.

**The Gay-Donbeya.** By Sir HARRY JOHNSTON. With an Introduction by H. G. WELLS. (Chatto & Windus. 7s. net.)  
**'Shepherd's Warning.'** By ERIC LEADBITTER. (Allen & Unwin. 7s. net.)

THESE two novels, though entirely different in scene and ostensible subject, are both concerned with what Mr. Wells calls "the New Imperialism." For while the leading nations of Europe were adding a vast colonial empire to their responsibilities, at the same time there was going on in Great Britain itself that increase in population which has left us the inheritance of villages swollen to towns and towns to vast cities. We have, as a nation, outgrown our strength in two ways, and while "The Gay-Donbeya" deals with the growth of the Empire, Mr. Leadbitter is concerned with the expansion of a village. Both books are by keen observers, by men whose strength lies in observation rather than in creation. Both Sir Harry Johnston and the author of "Shepherd's Warning" are set very decidedly in the age of multiple shops and giant combines, of steam-power and the exploitation of labor, "native" and otherwise.

Sir Harry Johnston was struck by the happy idea of making his people, at least as far as names go, the descendants of those Dickens characters who live so vividly in the ideal that we can easily believe in the possibility of their also begetting progeny in that same world. But there is this difference between Dickens and Sir Harry—that where Dickens, even when he dealt with the Poor Law or the Court of Chancery, was more concerned with people than institutions, Sir Harry obviously cares more for the trend of an age than for the actual individuals who move in it. There is, in fact, much more of Mr. Wells than of Dickens in "The Gay-Donbeya" and in Sir Harry's general reactions to his subject. For if you close his book and put it away for a time the thing that memory recalls is the picture of how certain young men, botanical and biological in temperament, went out to the far corners of the earth and found out how to supply cattle-cake and margarine: copra, on the whole, is, in the novel, more intriguing than Paul Gay-Donbey or Eustace Morven. Particularly one remembers that the big-wigs of the Foreign and Colonial Offices appear to have been just as careless and haphazard in their methods as one would expect them to be from what we have learnt of the country house atmosphere of wire-pulling and mental inertia. For amid the gossip and intrigue which is implied in "The Gay-Donbeya" the fact is made plain that the solid work of settlement in the African dependencies was done, amid enormous difficulty created mainly by the professional politicians and permanent officials, by scientists and freelance enthusiasts. Sir Harry, like Mr. Wells himself, is convinced that, if all classes are searched for the few just men who may be in them, these will, one and all, be physicists of some sort or other. But if the chief element in this formative time of the New Imperialism was the scientist, the next was certainly the woman. And woman, in the modern sense, as well as science, seems to have been rediscovered since the days when Dickens thought a melodramatic sinner or a pretty fool quite adequate as expressions of feminine nature. Nothing in "The Gay-Donbeya" is better than Suzanne the frank, who, with a fine inconsequence that almost rivals Mrs. Nickleby's, is yet the shrewdest observer in the whole book. Suzanne sees life whole, and in doing so marks decidedly the end of a period in woman's history. For there is nothing in the whole range of historic fact more startling than the difference between the position taken up by women in Dickens's time and the place they assume to-day. Suzanne Gay-Donbey, however, has one defect: she belongs, not to the late Victorian time, but to our own. She is an anachronism in Sir Harry's pages. Yet it is the women, not the men, who are the individual people of his book.

When we turn from the chaos of the big world where live the folk who "matter" to village life in Fidding, we realize how little we have actually learnt of that same big world. There has been much gossip about Queen Elizabeth,

but we have never met her face to face. Yet, fundamentally, in the village as much as at the Foreign Office, there is the feeling of purposelessness, of disorder, of creatures wandering in search of greater blessedness—and failing. It is the same in the small world as in the big.

The centre of "Shepherd's Warning" is an old laborer living in the cottage where he was born amongst fields that, in one sense, belong to him since he has made them fruitful. Bob Garrett is a craftsman and proud of his skill, yet with the tragedy hanging over him of being first ploughman no longer when old age has robbed him of strength. And that, to his old-world sense of power, is worse to bear than the fall from eighteen shillings a week to ten. But slowly, too, the bigger tragedy is going on around him, the tragedy of the loss of essential manhood in the new generations through the very process of increasing material prosperity. The old cottages, crowded and insanitary, yield to red brick houses, to trams, multiple shops, to margarine instead of butter, and, worst of all, to standardized labor, joyless and prideless because it has none of the old sense of mastery about it through individual and personal achievement.

This is the other side of the picture: the growth of great populations at home, fed partly by these same tropic products by which Sir Harry Johnston is so greatly intrigued, working fixed hours, living in sanitary houses, but becoming toned insensibly to drab hues and dependent on cinemas for joy. "Shepherd's Warning" marks, too, in one sense, the beginning of a new school of fiction, because its author apparently realizes the fact that to most human beings life is neither so poignant nor so full of meanings as the individualist novelist—who has read his own sensitiveness into all men—would have us believe. Yet Mr. Leadbitter knows, too, that almost all men have the great hunger for self-expression. And this is here in "Shepherd's Warning" among a people untouched by anything bookish, smelling not at all "of the lamp," but stale with shag or sweaty from the furrows. Yet one lives out his will to power in his garden, another in her purposeless yielding to sex, another by an unreasoning faithfulness to an unknown ideal. But the old ploughman wins nearest of all, for his is the joy of the maker. It is this birthright of labor that has been lost, and no Cape to Cairo railway, no political greed, can ensure to the common man this breath of life that was easier to obtain in simpler times.

There is an ideal and a great one at the back of "Shepherd's Warning"; among the chattering jays of "The Gay-Donbeya" there is only the megalomania of more: more land, more products, more people. As though man himself were but a vast stomach.

## BOOKS IN BRIEF.

**"Employment Psychology."** By HENRY C. LINK, Ph.D. (Macmillan. 10s. 6d.)

"If there are ten applicants for a certain job, there will commonly be a large advantage to the employer who selects the most fit rather than the least fit of the ten. Also, if an individual has the choice among ten jobs of equal wage, there will commonly be a large advantage to him if he selects the job for which he is most fit, rather than the one for which he is least fit." This deep statement being made by a learned American professor, who contributes an introduction to this volume, a reasonable reader will not feel inclined to quarrel with it. It provides the key to this study of the application of scientific methods to the selection, training and grading of employees. Beyond doubt, much study and ingenuity went to the making of Professor Link's experiments, which he describes lucidly and in detail. He has tested his theories by practice in shops and factories, and his eloquence persuades us that his rules will guide employment offices in selecting workers for their innate or acquired abilities and in detecting the unfit. A description is given of a portable laboratory in which to conduct the tests. At first some workers referred to it as the "pill box," the "monkey cage," and the "star chamber," but now, we are told, they regard the psychological laboratory with admiration.

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## The Week in the City.

(BY OUR CITY EDITOR.)

THURSDAY.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN'S speeches in Parliament this week created a surprise—not on account of the rejection of the War Wealth Levy, which was generally expected, but because he rejected at the same time all the alternative methods of raising the huge sum (which he has frequently declared to be absolutely necessary) for floating debt cancellation. In effect the Chancellor refers us back to the Budget and says "as you were." The abandonment of heroic measures lifts a great weight off the financial and investment world, where fears of a *débâcle* were beginning to grow—fears which have obviously frightened the Chancellor and the Cabinet. But the floating debt problem remains, and it is made the more difficult by the national accounts for the past two weeks. Following on an addition of £11 millions in the previous week, £22 millions are added to the floating debt in the latest return. Treasury Bill sales were good and exceeded repayments by nearly £9 millions, but Ways and Means Advances had to be increased by £13 millions, the expansion being necessitated by the huge distribution of War Loan dividends, to which I referred last week. Referring to this expansion, Mr. Chamberlain merely remarked in effect: "Is it temporary? If so it is all right. If it is permanent, it is very dangerous." His Budget provides £60 millions for floating debt reduction doing the year, and apparently he is going to be content with that and virtually eats all his words about the great urgency of the problem. Following the Chancellor, Sir Frederick Banbury advocated an attractive Funding Loan and a saving of £250 millions in Government expenditure. But in this latter matter one has given up hope of the present *régime*. The possibility of an attractive Funding Loan must be in the minds of many; for the first market effect of the abandonment of the levy was a decline in gilt-edged stocks, induced by the idea that the Treasury would be forced to offer better terms to borrowers and so depress existing Government issues. Until Mr. Chamberlain spoke on Tuesday night markets were remarkably stagnant. Thereafter there was brisker business and a recovery in some markets; but the recovery was hampered by fears of dearer money. To-day's decision to leave the Bank Rate at 7 per cent. relieved tension, but has not removed uneasiness about the possibility of an advance to 8 per cent. in the near future.

Silver has fallen to about 3s. 10d. per ounce, which compares with the highest level of nearly 7s. 6d. New York exchange has been satisfactorily strong round about 3.90 to 3.92.

## MORE HOUSING LOANS.

The conspicuous success achieved by the joint Middlesex, Kent and Essex Loan has, as was hoped, inspired others to follow this example of co-operation in housing finance. An issue of £4,500,000 by Bradford, Cardiff and Croydon is out and has been readily underwritten. The terms of the issue are 6 per cent. at 95½, and a good response is expected. At the same time the sale of London Housing Bonds is being vigorously pushed. There is no purpose for which money is more vitally needed, and a generous subscription is certainly a duty for the well-to-do Londoner. It is, however, most unfortunate that the advertisements give no indication whatever that any arrangements have been made for making a ready market for the bonds. Until this point has been cleared up, it would be unfair to the interests of the small investor not to point out the importance of marketability. The rich man can afford to wait his opportunity, but the man of small means often finds it necessary to realize an investment quickly, and it is not safe for him to invest in any security for which the continual existence of a ready market is not assured. It is therefore to be hoped that the authorities will be able to announce clearly that satisfactory arrangements have been made for a market.

## THE HOME RAILWAY MARKET.

The ordinary stocks of British railways have suffered as much as any type of security from the general stock market *malaise* of recent months. The extent of the difference between to-day's prices and those current at the close of last year is exhibited in the table printed below. This table

also shows that yields of well over 9 per cent. are to be obtained on such famous stocks as Midland Deferred, North Eastern Consols, and Great Western Ordinary. The general tendency to depression has, of course, been strongly reinforced by rising wage bills and general costs, by uneasiness as to labor trouble, and fears of nationalization. It must not, however, be forgotten that the Government guarantee to the railways still has more than a year to run, and until then there would appear to be little fear of dividend reductions. Moreover, the increased freight rates and the fore-shadowed further rise in passenger rates are at any rate steps towards placing the lines on an economic working basis. Also the threat of nationalization does not seem to come nearer. In view of all these considerations, the price falls set out below may be thought to exaggerate the gloom:—

	Dividends.		Prices		Rise or Fall.	Present Yield.
	1918.	1919.	End of 1918.	June 9, 1920.		
Caledonian Ord.	34	32	49	40	-9	9 7 6
Gt. Central, 1894, Pref.	3	3	40½	32½	-8	9 4 6
Great Eastern Ord.	2½	2½	37½	30	-7½	9 3 0
Do. 3½% Pref., 1893	3½	3½	50½	50½	—	6 18 6
Great Northern Def.	2½	2½	40½	29½	-11	9 6 6
Do. 4% Perp. Pref.	4	4	64	64½	+½	6 4 0
Great Western Ord.	7½	7½	93	79	-14	9 1 9
Do. 5% Pref. Stock	5	5	83	79½	-3½	6 5 9
Lancashire & Yorkshire Ord.	4½	4½	73½	56	-17½	8 0 9
Do. 3% Cons. Pref.	3	3	49½	49	-½	6 2 6
London & North-West. Do. 4% Cons. Pref.	7	7½	95½	84½	-11	8 17 0
Do. 4% Cons. Pref.	4	4	66	65	-1	6 3 0
London & South-West. Ord.	5½	6	85½	63½	-22	9 9 0
Do. 4% Pref. Stock	4	4	64	65½	+½	6 6 0
London Brighton Def.	4½	4½	60½	44½	-16	10 2 0
Do. Pref. Ord.	6	6	84	68	-16	8 16 6
London Chatham Arb. Pref.	4½	4½	57½	47	-10½	9 10 0
Do. 4½% 2nd Pref.	4½	4	34	31	-3	12 18 3
Midland Deferred	4½	4½	60	52	-8	9 2 9
Do. 2½% Perp. Pref.	2½	2½	41½	41½	—	6 1 3
North-Eastern Consols	7	7½	97½	85½	-12½	8 15 0
Do. 4% Pref.	4	4	65	64½	-½	6 4 0
South-Eastern Def.	2	2½	37½	27½	-10	9 1 9

Whatever may be the fears of the holder of railway ordinary securities, the holder of prior-charge stocks should not be troubled with much uneasiness (in most cases) of interest failure or confiscation dangers. The market, indeed, for prior-charge Home railway stocks has recently shared in the support given to gilt-edged securities. Some of the yields to be obtained on this class of stock are attractive. A yield of £8 16s. 6d. per cent. on Brighton Preferred cannot be passed without notice.

## SOME REPORTS OF THE WEEK.

A batch of reports of prominent companies has appeared this week. For the year ended March 31st, 1920, J. Lyons & Co., the caterers, show profits of £396,684, as compared with £258,077 in the previous year. The company was working with increased capital, £1,000,000 of 7 per cent. preference shares having been issued. The report records "a great increase in turnover, more than commensurate with the increased capital, although the ratio of gross profit is again reduced." Brunner, Mond's latest report shows a net profit of £1,129,150, which is about £117,000 better than for the previous year. The ordinary shares receive 11½ per cent. for the year, against 10 per cent. During the year the directors sold the ordinary shares in Joseph Crosfield & Sons Limited and William Gossage & Sons Limited, held by the company, for the sum of £4,000,000, which left a capital profit of £2,100,000 on the books. Callender's Cable & Construction Company shows net profits of £84,025 for the year 1919, as compared with £72,562 for 1918. The ordinary dividend is raised from 12½ per cent. to 15 per cent., £33,000 is allotted to reserve, against £25,000, and the carry forward reduced by about £9,000 to £105,803. The Ebbw Vale Steel, Iron & Coal Company produces a report covering the three years from April 1st, 1917, to March 31st, 1920. The net profits for that period were £1,122,581. A sum of £250,000 is allocated to reserve, and the ordinary shares are to receive a 15 per cent. dividend in respect of the past year. The Bleachers' Association had a remarkably prosperous year in 1919-20, net profits being £813,580, against £475,513 in 1918-1919. The ordinary shares receive 15 per cent. and a 5 per cent. bonus, against a 10 per cent. distribution last year.

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